



A
DISCOURSE, OF
the true and visible Markes
of the Catholique
Churche

Written by M. THEOD. BEZA. Vezelius.

GOD IS MY



HELPER.
PAG. 7.11

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without Temple-bar, in the Strond, neere
vnto Sommer-set-house.





TO THE
RIGHT WOR-
shipfull, Sir George Ca-
rey knight, knight Mar-
shall of her Maiesties housholde, &c.

T. VV. his poore welwiller, wisheth aboun-
dance of all good thinges in this life, and eter-
nall bleitednesse in the life to come,
through Christe.



OVVE glorious and ex-
cellent a thing the church
it selfe is; may appeare
(Right VVorshipfull) by
many meanes: And a-
mongst the rest, euen by
this: that all; both good
and bad, do challenge and
claime (whether iustly or vnjustly, I minde not
much nowve to dispute) not onely the name and
ty.le thereof: but the veris possession of it also.

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I hope I shall not neede much to busie my selfe in the prooffe of this point: Because, as it manifestly appeareth, by sundry examples of former times, and particularly, by the people of the Jewes in the dayes of Ieremiah the prophet: who cried out: The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord: this is the Temple of the Lord: as is to be seene in the seventh chapter of his booke: So haue we a most euident and playne testimony of the same in this declining and doting olde age of the world: For whereabout are those large disputations which at this daye are handled betweene the catholiques, as they would be called, and the true professours of Christs Gospel, most occupied; I pray you; but speciallye about this question, and other controuersies concerning the same? The thing rather, that in my mind is more to be stood vpon, is this: namely, to see: what shoulde be the cause why, that notwithstanding that same greedy desire that the greatest number haue, to retaine with them both the name of the Church, and the Church it selfe: yet so few haue it & hold it fast. All men haue in them, notwithstanding the defacing of God his image in them through sinne, by some small sparkes of reason and iudgement; which yet remayne in them vndefaced, A certaine thinking after Blessednes, and the hope of a better life: And this is the more inkindled in mennes hearts and heads, when it pleaseth God, to vouchsafe them in some measure of his mercy, some light and knowledge of
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of his holy truth: by which they see, that with out the Church there can bee no saluation. And that causeth them to presse on forward to vvish to be of that number that hath so gracious a Priuilege graunted vnto the same: And yee all this notwithstanding, it is a vvonder to see, how the greatest part of the vvorld is deceiued, vvith a bare shadow and shevve of the same: For, that I may speake nothing of the Infidelles in their idolatries; nor of the Turkes, cleauing fast to their Mahomet; Nor of the Ievves, openly dispiriting Christe the Sauour of the vvorld: and therefore all of them, of necessitye out of the Church, and consequently void of saluation also: because they hold not the head, which is Christ. To let all these passe, I say, and to come to them vvwhich in outward shevv make profession of Christianitie and true religion; how many of them are there that are violently carried avvaye vvith as grosse and palpable Idolatrie, as the heathen? VVhat infinite multitudes perish thorough ignorance, and want of the sound knowvledge of God in Christe? how many are drovned, to the hazarding of their ovvne soules, vvith horrible erroures and heresies? And what a number are there in the vvorld beside, that shaking handes, as it vvere vvith Atheists (ye the vvorst people of al) do lye vvelling in the pleasures and profits of this life; making no account at all, either of God in heauen, or of his Church here in earth? And vvhat would the Lord teach vs by al this: verely first that vve must haue

much more to be desired, than all the pleasures of this vvorld
4. lxxxv. in better

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better eyes to discern his congregation by, then the light of our ovvn reason: for if euen then vvhē vvee haue his vvorde, vvee can yet hardly discry it, partly because it is discerned spiritually, and partly because by the hard dealings of the enemies it is sundry times brought to so lowv an eb, that it seemeth to be shut vp in one mans person. And therefore do say in the confession of our Christian faith, that vve do beleue that there is a holy catholique Chūrche: that then vve shall neuer be able to sepetate it from the Synagogue of Satan by our ovvne vnderstanding and vvite: vvvhich consideration is yet further profitable; euen for the confutation of that immagination and conceit, which our aduersaries haue and hold concerning mans freewil: for if vve cannot by our ovvn cōprehension perceiue eyther the place in vvvhich, or the personnes amongst vvhome, the Church it selfe is, but that vvee must haue from aboue, for that purpose, greare enlightning both of knowvledge and fayth, much lesse shall vvee bee able to comprehend those vvonderfull treasures of most founde, comfortable, and profitable doctrine that the Lord hath freely bestorved vppon his sayde Church: Of vvvhich the Apostle saith: that the eye hath not scene them, the eare hath not hearde them, neither can mans heart comprehend them. 2. Cor. 2. 9. VVherefore the case standeth not vvith vs as heretofore wee haue bene borne in hand: And as yet to this day, is openly defended amongst Papistes: that man in his meere naturall gifts, hath vvill to desire, and povver to perfourm
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suche things as are good: for if it bee God that worketh in vs both the vwill and the deed; & that according to his ovvn good pleasure. Philip. 2. 13. And that vve are not sufficient of our selues, as of our selues to thinke a good thought. 2. Cor. 3. 5. It must needes follovv that vve can not claime any such thing vnto our selues, vvithout robbing God of his glorie, vvithout lifting vp of our selues above measure and trueth, and vvithout impeaching the authoritie and credite of the Scriptures, which in many places affirmeth, and namely Genes. 6. 5. that all the immaginations of the thoughtes of mans heart are only euil every day: But to let this passe, and to come to the things we haue in hande, VVe are hereby in the second place instructed, that vvee muste haue more sure and infallible markes, to knowe God his Church by, than those vvwhich the Papistes giue vs, to wit: vniuersalitie, Antiquitie, and content: for if beside that great number of Idolatours, and misbeleeuers mentioned before; vvho also can alleadge for themselves great antiquity & agree, and (as he that is not vvilfully blinde, may easilye see) there are, and that euen in the lappe and bosome of the Church, many hypocrites and heretiques also, vvwhich yet shall not be saued: we may then safely conclude that the forenamed things are not only not the assured notes: but no notes at all rather of the true Church of God: both because they are common to many things besides the Church; yea euen to euill things, and also
because

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because that though that assemblye which pretendeth to bee the Church, shoulde haue them; and yet haue not therevwithal the trueth and sinceritie of God his doctrine; it is no vvhit at al the better for all that. All these thinges tende to this end: that for as much as in trueth there is but one Church, euen as the heade thereof is one, and therefore so must the body be: or else it shoulde be monstrous, notwithstanding that there bee sundry particular partes and members thereof, as vvee see in a mans body; all yet making but one and the selfe same body: And forasmuche also, as vwithout that Church there can be no saluation, because vnto it alone is it; that the Lord hath made such large and gracious promises: as; The gates of Hell shall not preuayle agaynste it: and that to it onely belongeth the forgiuenesse of sinnes in this life, and euerlasting saluation in the life to come: And lastly, forasmuch as it behoueth every one, euen as he tendeth his ovvne peace of conscience, and regardeth the hope of eternall blessednes; to be vwatchfull, in discrying and knowing this Church; and carefull in vniting himselfe vnto the same: euerye good man therefore should earnestly labour, not onely to knowe it: but also stedfastly, to ioyne himselfe vnto it in the religious exercises thereof: That so in the holye feeling of the communion of Saints, he may bee a fruitfull partaker of all those excellent graces that God in great mercie hath bequethed to the same. True it is, that Satan, the common enemy
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of mankind (vvhoe in his owne person, and the
personne of his instruments and ministers labo-
reth to hinder, vvhoe he maye, the worke of oure
saluation) hath in all ages vsed, and yet presently
doth vse manye subtile and slye shifts, to let vs
from the apprehension and vnderstanding of
these great graces: for somtimes he maketh men
utterly and altogether carelesse of the Church,
and of the benefites and blessings of God pro-
mised thereto: As vvee maye see in that troupe of
prophane Atheistes and vvorlly minded men:
vvhoe make no more account of the Church, and
the holy exercises therof; than of a vaine tale, or
vnholly matter: no, nor so muche neither many
times; for the one they embrace vwith greedines
& v wonderfull delight; & the other they doe, ei-
ther most dispitfullie contemne, or most negli-
gently vse vwithout any spirituall profite at all
vnto themselves. But to beate downe these men,
there is no better VVeapon & vway, then to send
them to the fearefull iudgementes of Almighty
God, and to the horrors of hel and eternal con-
dénation (which many times they feele in them-
selves, though thorough the profites and plea-
sures of this present euil vvorlde, they vutterly put
them out) already prepared for them, and in due
time to be perfourmed to them. Sometimes a-
gaine, hee discourageth men, by setting before
them the feareful persecutions and troubles that
followe, and take holde of the particular mem-
bers of the Church, for the sincere profession of
God

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God his vvorde: for the surmounting of vvch
assaulte, men muste often meditate vppon those
same large & comfortable discourses that are put
dovvn and conteined in God his vvord for their
comfort in that behalfe, and to holde them back
from the fearful fall of renouncing god his truth,
having their eye fast fixed also vpon the particu-
lar deliuerances, that God in al ages hath vvrought
for his children: vvch are as it vv ere so manye
seales set vnto the vvriting; that he vvill alvvayes
deale so graciousslye vvith his children, as shall
make most for his ovvne glorie. and their eternall
comfort. Sometimes he deceiueth other somme,
and that no small some by the bare name and vi-
zor of the Churche alone; as vve may see in that
miserable sect of seduced Papists (vniustly called,
and claiming vnto themselues: the name of Ca-
tholiques) vvho vvvillingly embrace vnder the
title of the Churche, every fabulous falshood &
corruptiō vvhatsoeuer, not only not looking vp-
on the things, giuen or offred: vvch every vvise
man vvill doo, least he receiue poyson in steede
of vvhollosom and nourishing foode: but also not
considering the personne of the giuer, neither yet
vvhat right and authoritie he hath to bestow the
thinges giuen; vvch blockishnesse of the aduer-
saries, is rather to be lamented, because it is alto-
gether voide of common sense and reason, than
largely or learnedly confuted: And yet vve see
that manye good men haue not spared to take
great paines in that behalfe, both by preaching &
vvri-

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vvriting, to vvinne seduced souls vnto Cod. Sometimes hee setteth before other some, either the hardnesse that there is, to discric the true Church from the false Church by, (remember I pray you that vvhen I giue the name Church, to corrupted and counterfainted assemblies, I do it by abusioⁿ, as they say) or else layeth out the great iarres and dissentions, that many times are in the same, that so he may discourage them from ioyning themselves, to that holy societie, And indeede by this assault he specially preuaileth against them that are in some forvvardnes to encline to the truth: And yet by reason of some certaine vveakenesse in them, are easely turned the one vvay or the other: but these men, for the better staie of themselves, are to knowv, that there must be heresies, euen among the godly; that they vvwhich are approued among them might be knowvne. 1 Cor. 11. 19. and to be exhorted; that they labour to abounde in al holy knowvledge of God his vvil reuealed in his vvord; For therefore they erre, and are so vvns- stable in their opinions, because they knowv not the Scriptures; nor the povver of God. Nowve therefore, necessarie is it, that these stumbling blocks, cast by Satan & his seruants in our vvaies to hinder vs in the race and course of Godlines, should be remoued: that so vvee maye the more cheerefully and readily goe forevvard vvith faith, patience, and constancie, euen to the goal that is set before vs. In vvwhich respect, that excellent instrument of God in his Church; M. Theodor Beza,

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Beza, hab notably trauailed by publishing in the Latine tongue; a most learned Treatie of the visible Notes of the visible Church: And I, for the same consideration, haue according to my small measure, faithfully turned the same into our vulgar speech, offering these my poore trauailes vnto you (right vvorshipfull) and in you, to the vvhole Church of God in this land; as a sure testimonie of that vnfained good vvill vvwhich in the Lorde, I haue carried and vvill carry tovvards you all the dayes of my life. I hope, I shall not neede to spend many vvords eyther in commending the vvorke it self, or in declaring the reasons that haue moued me to attempt this matter: for if either the man vvho is the author therof, or the matter vvwhich is propounded, or the maner that he vseth in laying out of the thing, may add comendation vnto it, it shal not vvant any grace that may bring it into loue and lyking vvith the Godly: for as touching the man himselfe; hee is euen the mirror of the vvorlde in these our daies, for true knowvledg and vnfayned godlines, vvhatsoever the papists doe lyingly and slanderously babble to the contrarie: And as touching the matter, it is that vvwhich ought to be of greatest accompt amongst men, and vvwhich euen in respect of the bare name and title of it, is verie glorious and excellent much more in respect of the substance thereof it selfe: And for the manner of handling the things propounded, it is short for auoiding of tediousnes, it is plaine, euen for the capacitie of the simple; it is
found

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found in respect of the truthe it propoundeth;
And it is sufficient, not onely to instruct God his
childrē, but also to stop vp the aduersaries mouths
in this matter; and vvhath then vvanteth? or vvhath
can be more acceptable & profitable? vvhetherfore
I doubt not but it shall haue good entertainment
as amongst all the godly generally, so particu-
larly of your vvorship; vvho I know doth hartely
loue the Church, and carefully like, and tender
the causes therof; vvich also hath beene the
principall matter mouing me, to vndertake this
trauaile, and to dedicate the same, vvhatsoever it
be, vnto your vvorshippe; vvhome (for sundry
good graces, that God hath bestowed vpon you)
I do vnfailingly loue and reuerence in Christe.
Humbly praying and earnestly exhorting you ac-
cording to your measure of light and knowledg
receiued from the Lorde, to enforce your selfe to
the vttermost of your habilitie every maner of
vvay to the preferring and promoting of these
excellent matters, and namely those that con-
cerne the reformation of such corruptions as yet
remain amongst vs, either touching the mini-
sterie, or the discipline of the Church: for to this
ende hath God endued you vvith all the graces
that you haue presently receiued, or may hereaf-
ter thorovv his goodnesse attaine vnto; eyther of
vvirtue, vv wealth, learning, credit, countenance, byrth,
office, honor, or vvhatsoever els: vvherevnto I
vvill (thorovv God his grace) not onely styrre you
vp by all the holy and lawfull meanes I can: but
also

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also further you in my poore prayers to almighty God in that behalfe; that you may daily encrease and continue in the sounde knowvledge of his truth, in the stedfast faith of his promises, in the sincere zeale of his glorie, in vnfained loue of his holy vvord and the exercises thereof, and in care and conscience to put in practise, those good thinges that are enioyned you therein, that your vvhole life maye tende to the glory of God, the good of the Church and common vvealth, and the faithfull seruice of her maiestie, and your death be comfortable to your selfe; as beeing the speedy passage to eternall life, and profitable vnto others; vvile they be by your example instructed, both to liue and die vvell: vvich God graunt for his crucified Christ his sake; To vvhose gracious gouernement and good direction, I doe humbly commend your vvorship, and all yours both nowv and for euer. London the 16. of this Nouember. 1582.

*Your worships alwaies
ready in Christ Fe-
sus: T. W. the
Lorde his vnwor-
thy.*



A TREATISE OF THE TRVE AND
visible Notes of the Catholique Church.



M **E** **P** demaunde at
this daie, concerning
the markes and au-
thority of the church:
the question beeyng
rayled by those, who,
when they see their
erroures to bee refelled, by the worde
of God, obiecte vnto men, that are vn-
skilfull of these matters, the sacred
name of the Church: and by heaping vp
the disputations of auncient fathers a-
gainst Heretiques, they bring vs into
hatred, as though we had coꝛrupted both
the bookes of Gods worde, and also, as
though by violating all authority of the
church, we had (after the example of the

[a] Donatistes) set
vp altar against
altar: to be short,
as though be-
cause wee haue

[a] They were so called of one Dona-
tus, who baptized such as imbraced his o-
pinions, though they were baptized be-
fore, and made a schisme in the Church, a-
bout the yeere. 334.

shaken of the yoke of Babilon, we had

A

foꝛsaken

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forſaken the Church, without the which notwithstanding (euen as we our ſelues confeſſe) there is no ſaluation. And neither doth this ſubtle kinde of reaſoning, dꝛyue away the vnſkilfull onely, from the knowledge of the truth, but alſo cauſeth, ſome euen amongeſt them, which ſeemed moſt ſtedfaſt to wauer. Furthermoze, by this occaſion very many take counſell betwene both ſides, and as in opinions, they induour to mingle light with darkneſſe: ſo alſo in diſcerning of the true Church, they labour to mingle the baſtardly or false marks, with the true and proper marks therof. But except men would willingly be deceiued, the deceit of theſe men, might be very eaſely perceiued and auoyded. For, firſt men ſhould demaund, what that Church ſhould be, befoze they determine of the boundes of hir authoritie: which order they that doe not follow, commit truely that groſſe error, and worthy of ſtripes, which they call

Men muſt firſt define the Church, before they enquire any thing of the authoritye thereof.

[a] That is, the begging or taking of [a] *Petitio principij*. that as granted: which is in cōtrouerſie Go to then let vs ſee what theſe men meane by the Catho-
lique

lique Church.

These men holde (what so euer they dissemble) that the Church (in which we ought to abide , if we will be saued) is an assemblie of Bishops , whose calling and names may be set from the Apostles them selues. We say that this succession which is meerely personall , neyther is the Church , neither any whit at all pertayneth vnto those that alleadge the same.

That it is not the church , may appear euen vnto very children , first by this , y vnder the name of the church , properly taken , it is certain , that not only the Pastors , but also the flocks are comprehended : Now it is altogether ridiculous to define a part , as the whole , it selfe , because by that meanes the whole and the parte , shoulde be one and the selfe same thing.

They reply , that they vnderstand together with the Pastors , the very flocks them selues , cleauing vnto them. But this thing is also ridiculous , seeing that both hereticall , and backsliding Pastors , may succeed Pastors of sound iudge

That the Catholique Church is not rightly called euer congregati-on , in which I is a succession of Bishops.

The order of Bishops is not the church.

The consent of a bishop and of a flock is not alwayes I a note of a true church.

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iudgement, and hereticall flockes true
sheepe : and some times in deed the Pa-
stors are hereticall, and the sheepe true, &
contrary wise, true pastors may haue
hereticall sheepe. When that thing fal-
leth out : to wit, that both the Pastors
and the flockes, are hereticall, the very
aduersaries them selues dare not deny,
but that such a whole Church (although
it haue had auncestors in deed Aposto-
licall, & both the Pastors and the flockes,
do agree amongst themselves in falling
away) is yet notwithstanding altoget-
her a false Church, vnlesse they will
take these speeches, to wit, to be hereti-
call and vniuersal, for one and the selfe
same thing. But in the latter case, at
least wise in one part, there is found
falsehood, although on both sides that
personal succession may be found. Ther-
fore neither the succession of persons by
it selfe, neither such manner of consent,
doth of necessitie proue a true Church,
for as much as, where both are found,
yet some times there maye be a false
church : and there in some sort may be a
true church, where the pastor dissenteth
from

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from the sheepe, or the sheepe from the
pastor. Now, that men may, by exam-
ples both past and present, proue that
these things haue too often times fallen
out, no man I suppose will denie.

But againe they say, that they dispute
not of particular Churches, which they
graunt may fall away, but of that Ca-
tholique or vniuersall Church, which is 1. Tim. 3. 15.
the pillar & foundation of truth. But how
I pray you do they define this catholike
Church. Firste by a certayne place, as
those that will haue catholike and Ro-
man to be al one: Secondly, by the mul-
titude, as they which vpbraide vs with
fewnes. Let vs see, therfore what man-
ner of arguments these be. They be (if
they be kept within the iust rules of
reasoning) vnlesse I be deceaued, these
and such like. The church of Rome tea-
cheth so: very many, in respect of a very
few so belecue, and so it was from hand
deliuered vnto vs. Therefore this is the
catholique truth. But who is so far void
of all reason, that he seeth not here a-
gaine, *Petitio principij*, and the thing in
controuerſie to be taken as graunted?

I

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Catholique
and Roman
are not all
one.

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Shew vs therefore, ye Sophisters, or at least wise teach vs probablie, firste how a part should be y^e whol (y^e we may graunt vnto you your Romish church, to be a principall member of the catholicke church). And then from whence, I pray you, haue ye learned, this Romish Church, to be ordayned for a perpetuall rule of truth: and from whence haue ye drawn that to be true, which is approued of the greatest number? Merely ye shall neuer proue this, out of the bookes of the old or new Testament. For those corrupt argumentes: *Vpon this rocke I haue builded my Church: I haue prayed for thee Peter that thy fayth faile not: and that saying of Christe thrise repeated, feed my sheepe,* with men not altogether ignorant of these thinges, need not any further confutation. But happely, ye will proue it out of the writings of auncient fathers. As though for sooth it were the same thing, to commend the faith and religion of the church of Rome (as long as it was worthy praise) and to establish hir for the catholicke church, or a perpetuall rule to the catholicke church.

Mat. 16. 18.

Luk. 22. 23.

Ioh. 21. 15. 16

church. And seeing that by the name of the church of Rome (if these flatterers will speake that they thinke) they doe vnderstand no other thing, than the byshop of Rome him selfe, what madnesse is this, I beseech you, to haue the deciding of so great a controuersie, to depēd vpon y^e seat, in which their own writers being witnes, not so much the monsters of men, as Sathan himselfe, doth seeme to haue sit so many ages together.

These men replie, that the dignitie it selfe, and the authoritie of the seate, is not taken away by the faults of the persons: euen as the Leviticall high priesthood, was true then also, when it was exercised by vngacious and wicked high priestes. And neither do we thinke that either the dignitie, or els the efficacie of the ministerie, may be abolished, thoro^uwe the faultes of the ministers (which thinge these men yet thinke when it pleseth them, as they that hang that their transubstantiation, vpon the intēt of their sacrificing priestes a very rotten coard surely) but this we say that (their p^rinciple being graunted, to wit,

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that the Bysshop of Rome is that head, that should stand the catholique church, as in stead of a soule) it must altogether followe, that this head be wyse, if they will haue all his members, that is, the particular Churches to be wise: And againe, if that be frantick, that the whole Church must be franticke also. Now, that the Romish Bishoppes haue bene franticke many ages together, not onely as priuate men, but specially also as Bishops: that is to say, that euerie one of them almost haue bene, not onely the most wicked of all men in respecte of their conuersation, (which thing these men can not denie, vnlesse they would rather be conuincd by their owne testimonies:) but also as concerning the points of our religion, whilst that, partly they haue neglected all true religion, and partly also haue set them selues against it, so much that (which thing two or three ages ago Petrarcha hath written, whose verses they commend.) Rome hath bene a thousande yeeres at the least, the temple of heresie, and hath utterly subuerted (as much as was in hir) all

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all the offices of Christ, yea so far forth that hee hath exalted hir selfe, aboue Christe him selfe (as the Apostles Iohn and Paule, greater than all exception haue fore tolde: all the beste approued wryters, Greeke & Latin, being the Bishops of other churches, so interpreting the same) vnlesse we haue sufficiently heretofore proued it, we are ready again to proue it, before all vpight iudges. Let this controuersie therefore, be firste decided. O yea Sophisters, before that ye of this fained foundation, as it were, graunted vnto you.

But go to, let vs graunt that the Bishoppes of Rome were suche, whose so great and large succession is alleadged by these men. Who yet vnlesse he be vtterly out of his wittes, will therefore conclude, that the bishop of Rome, is the vniuersall head, to whome who so euer doth cleaue, is to be iudged a true member of the Catholique Church: And yet these be the sophistications of these goodly fellows, which will haue catholique and Roman to be one and the selfe same thing: to wit, because Paule wrote, that
in

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Rom. i. 18. in his time, the faith of the Romans, was famous throughout all the world. But how much more rightly now, may we say, that the stench of that whore, hath not onely filled the earth, but hath ascended also, euen to heauen : and that excellent epistle of the Apostle written to the olde Romans, ought now truely to be written againste the Romans their successors.

2 Let vs now come vnto those, who esteeme their catholicke church, by the number and glorious shew of pages or seruaunts. Merely if these men speake truth, Christ and his flocke, shall iustly be pronounced excommunicat, and that multitude shal be the catholicke church, which so often times cried out, Take him away, take him away, crucifie him. The Apostle also shall be found a lyar, writing to the Corinthians: Brethren yee see your calling: that we are not many wise according to the fleshe, not many mightie, not many noble : to be shorte, then these men shall be woorthie, (whom to confute we may take paines) when either by reason or examples, they shall proue, that there are

The Catho-
like Church
must not be
esteemed by
the multi-
tude.

Mat. 26. 23.

1. Cor. 1. 26.

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are more wise men than fooles. Now then, I thinke it doth sufficiently appeare, that, by this bare successiō, which they brag of, that true catholike church, wherein we must abyde, cannot be discerned from the false Church, from which we ought of necessitie to depart.

But yet, before that we conclude this place, we muste refell an argument, which these Sophisters would haue to be deemed such a one as cannot be overcome. For say they, the fathers so dispute, from the succession of bishoppes, against auncient heretiques. But againe what can be more corrupt than this subtle kind of reasoning: for this is that which is well knowne, even to children which they are wount to call an elench,

Howv the fathers vsed the argumēt of personall succession.

[a] or a fallacy of composition and diuision.

[a] The fallacie of composition or diuision is a false conclusion, made by a wrong application of wordes alleadged or spoken: referring that to one, which is alleadged, or spoken to an other.

First therefore I deny, that a-

ny of the auncient fathers, were myn- ded to vie the recitall of Bishops, but to haue recourse rather euen to the Apostles. And why so? that the authoritie of doctrine,

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doctrine, rather than of persons shoulde be mainteined: But these men object vnto vs, the succession of their bishops, not in deede bishops, so far letting passe the mention of that Apostolicall doctrine, that they woulde haue it accounted a wicked thing, to demaund it at his handes, that woulde proue him selfe to succeed the auncient byshoppes. Now I pray you, howe many authoꝝ of blasphemies, haue sit in those chiefe seates of *Alexandria, Antioche, Constantinople?* yea, what seat will these men shew me somewhat more famous, where some hereticall bishops, haue not helde their seate? And as touching the *Romish* chayres, from which these men by a rotte coard hang the catholique church. Ho-

[a] Monothelites, were certain heretiks about the yeaꝛe. 565, who affirmed that there vvas but one will and one action in Christ: denying that ther was in him two naturall willes and actions, which might aunswere to his two natures.

norius the [a] Monothelite, openly condemned of the first general counsell and priuately of Agatho and

other Roman Bisshoppe: And Iohn the 22. thinking euill touching the soule of man: in like manner condemned of the colledge

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colledge of Sorbon in Paris, were founde
to haue sit in that seate. To let passe,

[a] *Liberius*, [a] *Liberius* for ambitions sake fell into

[b] *Vigilius*, the Arrian heresie.

and [c] *Anasta-* [b] He, while *Siluerius* the Pope liued (by
sius, whom I see the ayde of *Belisarius*, the captaine of the
of some to be ex- Emperors armie, obtained the popedome.

cused, although [c] He meaneth of *Anastasius* the 2. who
Gratian, 2. *Disti.* fell into the heresie of *Arrius* and *Eutiches*,
which heresies *Acatius* also him selfe did
19. reckoneth propound, about the yeere, 484.

this last also as an *Acatian* heretique a-
mongst the condemned Popes.

But if any man would object, y these
are blotted out of the number of Bys-
shops, and therfore are not comprehen-
ded in that title or role of succession: yet
this he shal be inforced to graunt vs, to
wit, that the succession of y seat of Rome,
was then at the least broken of, when
these were therfore blotted out (which
persons notwithstanding they themsel-
ues as yet number in their Catalogue)
because they had declined from the Apo-
stolicall doctrine. Wherevpon followeth
that which *Tertulian* rightly affirmeth *Tertulian.*
that religion ought to be proued or tried
not by the persons, but the persons by re-
ligion.

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ligion. But here truly I confesse, that I do somewhat ouershoot my self, for seeing the question is of doctrine, what doth this appertain, to the Bishops of the Church of Rome, whome all Christendome knoweth nowe so manye yeeres, to haue beene for nothing lesse carefull, then for anye doctrine, eyther true or false, but onely for to establish and enlarge their owne tyrannie.

But they will say, no man hath condemned these Popes. I confes it. For who would haue taken to himself this lawfull authority against their tiranny, who had perswaded all men, that they ought to be iudged of none? Therefore there hath bene not of late onely, but many ages together, not an interruption, but a full abruption or renting of the succession of Rome, from the body of the catholique true church, except peraduenture these men iudge, that it is something lesse, eyther to belleeue nothing, or to teache nothing, than to be an Heretique.

And I beseeche you what impudencie is

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is this, to haue the knowledge of trueth to hang vpon succession: whereas on the contrary, these men themselves can not deny, but that the trueth ought necessarily to go before succession.

True doctrine ought to go before true succession.

And these Sophisters, if they had bene in the times of Christ, by what Bishoply succession, would they haue acknowledged the true church: surely not by the title or name of the Leuiticall high priests: because that priesthood was then at an end: and Christ cannot be called the successour of Aaron vnlesse Iudaisme be agayne established: wherefore also he is sayd to be made a high priest, not according to the order of Leui, but according to the order of Melchisedec, Therefore the holy men at that time, acknowledged the Catholique church, without the marke of personall succession: to wit, by the comparison of the doctrine of the Prophetes, with the doctrine of Christe him selfe, and the Apostles. Which is so farre true, that on the contrarye, none haue lesse acknowledged Christe, than they that haue cleaued to a Bishoply succession. Therefore that personall suc-

The Christian church in the time of Christe, could not be knowne by the succession of Persons.

Heb. 7. 16. 17

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succession, is no true and perpetuall
marke of the Catholique Church.

These men happely, beeing driven
from the Leviticall succession, will a-
gaine obiect another succession from the
Prophetes. But neyther so, shall they
speake the truth, if they sticke in the per-
sons them selues, for the succession of
Prophetes was not perpetuall, no more
than the succession of Priests: yea rather
it was broken of a long time, especially
after Malachie. They wil also obiect vn-
to vs that saying: *The Scribes & Pharises
sit in Moses chaire.* But agayne, they
shold remember, y same Christ to haue
said: *Take heed of the leauen of the Phari-
sees:* And therefore by that saying of
Christ, we are not called backe to a suc-
cession of persons, but to a succession of
doctrine.

Mat. 23. 2.

Mat. 16. 6.

But I haue besides an other thing
more peremptorie (as they them selues
speake) to aunswere againste that, in
which these men falsly boast themselues
to followe the authoritie of the Fa-
thers in discrying the church, by which
thing also their wilines may more and
more

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more be made manifest. I denie therefore, that any of the auncient fathers haue at any time made mention of this succession, but either against Schismatiques, whilst yet a lawfull succession remayned, (as it was done against the Donatistes) or againste them, whiche brought forth new bookes of our religion, as were, in the beginning almost an infinite number as [a] Simon, [b] Valentine, [c] Basilides, [d] Montane, to conclude y whole troupe of most shamelesse men. After this sort the Fathers of right iudgement, gathered and reserued against these

The auncient fathers vsed not the argument of personall succession against all heretiques.

[a] I suppose that he spekethe here of Simo Magus, mentioned in Act. 8. of whom many thinges are writte in the old writers, specially he affirmed that Christe was not come, neither suffered any thing of the Iewes, but that he himself was Christ. [b] He amongst other things taught, that Christ the sonne of God, tooke not mans flesh of the virgin, but that he had a spirituall or heauely body, which passed thorow the virgin Marie, as water thorow a pipe or Conduit. He vvas about the yeere. 150.

[c] He affirmed, that Christ appeared not in the substance of flesh, but in a phantasticall body, & that one Simon vvas crucified in his steede, about the yeare. 124.

[d] He taught that Christe vvas not very man, and that he ascended into heauen yvithout his flesh, and first made lawes for abstinence from meates and marriages, hee vvas in the yeare. 180.

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Such as pretended to be inspired vwith reuelations. The Messalian heretiques were so called, who affirmed that baptism and the Lords supper did neither profit nor hurt, but that those which gaue themselves to prayer onely or sleeping should be inspired vwith the spirite, vvhich being once receyued, afterwards they had no need of the word, or any other exercise of godlines, but that he that vvas so inspired, vvas altogether vwithout sinne, and did foresee thinges to come, and did sometimes behold God with their eies.

[c] *Enthusiasts*, saying. If your doctrine be true, eyther there hath not beene euer yet anye church, or the doctrine which you alleage is old and ancient. But that both these thinges are false, appeareth by that, both because the apostles haue gathered together the church of Christe, and you teach your doctrines, as taken not out of the writings of the Apostles, but as newly reuealed vnto you by the holy ghost. And agayne, (sayd the fathers,) both these thinges appeare by that, that we count the beginnings of our churches, by ascending bpward, euen to the Apostles themselves: but you could not haue receiued from the Apostles your thinges, which ye first deuised.

Here remained one thing, which the moste subtile of those moste fantastickall persons obiected, to wit, that all thinges were not reuealed to the apostles, and therfore that men ought to beleue their reuela-

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revelations also. But *Tertulian* (whom
I marvail, could afterward be deceived
wth *Montanus* holy ghoſte) moſt

plentifully, and ſtrongly con-
futeſh this preſcription, ſhe-
wing that the Lord hath neither
kept backe any thing from the
apoſtles, (the chiefe builders
of his church:) nor agayn, that
the apoſtles haue concealed, a-
ny of thoſe things, which they
had receiued of Chriſte. After
this ſort I ſay, the fathers vſe
fed. the argument of the ſucceſ-
ſion of perſons agaynſte thoſe
heretiques, altogether by de-
monſtration as it were. But
they vſed it not in like ſorte, a-
gainſt y^e [a] *Sa*

moſatans [b] *Sa-*
bellians, [c] *Ar-*
rians, [d] *Pelagi-*
ans: to be ſhort,
againſte anye
with whome,
the queſtyon

was not of the very bookes, but of the

[a] So called of *Paulus*
Samofatenus, vvhoe de-
nied the ſonne of God,
to haue deſcended from
heauen, but that Chriſt
did proceed from *Marie*
in the earth, hee was a-
bout the yere, 372.

[b] So called of one *Sa-*
bellius, who taught that
there was but onely one
perſon in the godhead, &
confelled that the trinity
was diſtincted in reſpect
of names only, & not in
reſpecte of perſons. He
was about the yere 320.

[c] So called of one *Ar-*
rius, who affirmed, that
the Son was not truly &

naturally God, neither coeternall with the
father, but to haue had a beginning, & to be
made of nothing, he was about the yere, 320

[d] So called of one *Pellagius*, who held free
will, and that euery man might obtayne ſal-
uation by his owne workes: that infants were
borne, vvithout originall ſin: and that *Adam*
hurt himſelfe onely by his fall. He vvwas about
the yere, 466.

A Treatise of the true and visible meaning, because this had berne verie foolishhe.

Briefly therfore I answered these two thinges: that the auncient Fathers, whose authoritie these men shameleslie abuse, haue, neither at any time seperated the succession of their bishops, from the succession of the Apostolical doctrine: nor haue set this succession, against any other heretiques, but against those, of whom some new reuelation was pre-

[a] They mayntaine amongest other errors, reuelations, and take away the baptisme of infants.

[b] They (casting a side all feare of God vvhatsouer) hold, that men may lyue as they list.

[c] So called of one Casper Svingfeldius, vvhoe held, the same matters that the Anabaptistes do.

tended: As at this day of the [a] Anabaptistes, [b] Libertines [c] Svingfeldians. And therefore, for as muche as now the controuersie is, betwixt the Romanistes and vs, for two thinges onely, to wit, for the interpretation of the Scripture: and whether the wordes of the Prophetes and Apostles, doe most fully containe, what so ever we ought

to beleue, it is proued that they, in the first point, impudently abuse the example of the fathers, in alleadging against vs the argument of succession: and in the

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the other, is ministred vnto vs a sure weapon, to confute them. And that this succession also was alleadged against the Donatistes as schismatickes, this nothing toucheth vs, whom these men account, not properly for Scismatickes, but for heretiques: of which thing notwithstanding, we will say some thing in his proper place.

a But go to, let vs gratify them a litle. and (which thing may be done without any preiudice of the trueth). Let vs graunt vnto these men how much force soeuer they can imagine, of that their personall succession. What shall this beseech you, help their cause?

b For, that we may begin, at the highest step of their Hierarchie, or priestlike gouernement, as they call it, that is, at that vniuersall mynisteriall head (vnto whome they afterwarde, appropriated the name of Pope, which before was common to all Bishoppes,) they shall as easely finde the Diuell him selfe in the kingdome of God, as any such head, either in the booke of the newe Testament, or in the auncient church. For be-

a That the false church of Rome, is not onely not propped

2 vp, by the argument deriued from the personal succession of the apostles: but also ouerthrown, although the question, be not of the doctrine

b That there was neuer any Apostolicall, vniuersall ministeriall head, and therefore that his succession is not Apostolicall.

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rie children know this, how false, folish, and absurd arguments they be, whatsoeuer they bring out of the scriptures to proue the same. And as concerning the history of that auncient purer church: (that is to say, in this behalfe verelie, euen to the tymes of that manslaier Phocas) they shall finde none, that so interpreted the primacies, and glorious titles, which are attributed to the bishop of Rome (although in deed the bishops of Rome, ambitiouslie sought nothing more, and there wanted not some, who most shamelesly euen then flattered the) as that they did for all that, gyue this degree of vniuersall head vnto him. Therfore, they haue not Christ, nor Peter, but that most vile man of al, Phocas I say, the empero, for the autho of this vniuersallitie: and they haue Boniface the thirde, the head or beginner of this tyrannie: or (that I may vse the words of Gregorie the great himselfe) the chiefe or head of Antichristianisme: in so much, that the Romishe popedome, doth but onely sirtene yeares at the most, goe before Mahumetisme, or the turkishe religion.

gion.

But, by what sleightes, that monster hath vsurped, and attayned this tyrannie, who, I praie you, at this day can be ignorant, vnlesse he be ignorant of histories, or whose eyes Satan hath blinded: yea, seeing that this most holy father, doth boast him selfe to be, not the successor of *Peter* alone, but of *Paul* also (whose heads being cut off, not so much by newes hang men, as by the Pope himselfe, he ingraueth in these his leaden seales): it must needs be, either that after ward two heads were growen into one, whose authoritie after ward, passed for sooth to this successor of them both: or els that neither *Peter* nor *Paule*, were this onely vniuersal, ministeriall head: except he woulde rather acknowledge, that the catholique churche, hath had at the beginning two heades vpon the earth.

But what say I: that I may speake nothing here of so many *Antipopes*, or *Popes* one against an other, when as *Liberius* and *Damasus*, at one and the same time, (as all men affirme), obtayned

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ned that seate of Rome, where was then that one vniuersall head: And let these thinges be sufficiently spoken, touching the deliuerie of that spirituall sworde from hand to hand.

And as concerning that other sworde, which they call, secular or politike, wherewith they haue ouerthrowen all magistracie: From whence I pray you do they take the beginning of this iurisdiction: for, though we shoulde beleue that fable, of the donation or gyfte of Constantine, to be as true, as it was shamelesly sayned, yet truely it shal not be set from the apostles, but fro the emperour: neither yet graunted by Christ, or by Peter, but by men. Which thing notwithstanding, was neyther lawfull for Constantine to do, nor for the Bishoppe of Rome to receaue, although it had beene willingly offered him. Wherefore, if they shall of their owne authoritie, requyre agayne these two feathers, the churche those former, to wit, the ecclesiasticall gouernement, and Kinges and Princes these latter, to wit, ciuill iurisdiction and authoritie (both which in
their

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their time shall come to passe) this fellow will then appeare, not the head of the church, but an unfeathered cuckow. And these things concerning this head, haue I put down in few words, because they haue of late, by them of our side beerie plentifully, both out of the worde of God, & out of the truest histories of former times, & to be short, out of the testimonies of y^e Popes theselues, ben manifestly declared and plentifully proued.

Now the head of this succession being cut off, what shall the rest of the body be, but a roteen and stinking carcase? Truly them selues are compelled to confesse, that the next degree vnto this head, to wit, the order of cardinales, as it is now, cannot be fet from the more auncient time. Where follow primates and Archbishoppes, for scarce the verie name of Patriarkshippe, is yet remaining, and Mahomet, at the length hath ended the matter in controversy, which firste arose, betweene the

[a] *Quartumvi. i.*, and afterwards betweene the

That there can be noe Apostolicall succession in the Cardinales, Metropolitans, Primates, or Archbishops

[a] That is, those foure men that tooke vpon them, the gouernment of the vvhole world: he meaneth the foure Patriarkes, to wit, Hierusalem, Alexandria, Constantinople & Rome,

[b] *Quin-*

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[a] That is the
 suerme that toke
 vppon them the
 gouernement of
 the world.

[a] *Quintumviri*. Therefore the Ni-
 cene councell it selfe, doth not refer
 the beginning of these offices, to the
 word of God, or Apostolicall insti-
 tution, eyther written, or not writ-
 ten, but to ancient custome. So that nei-
 ther can this succession, be thought to be
 Apostolicall.

The degree
 of Bishopps
 wherein they
 are exalted a-
 boue the rest
 of the Mini-
 sters or Pa-
 stors, was vn-
 knowne to
 the Apostles
 and therefore
 that there is
 no Apo-
 stolicall suc-
 cession therot.

There rest yet Bishopps so called of
 them, to wit, which are set in euerie
 diocesse aboue ministers (for the other
 inferiour orders, these pleaders of suc-
 cession, nothing esteeme,) whose onely suc-
 cession neuerthelesse, hath some shew of
 Apostolicall succession. But it maye
 plainly appeare, out of the firste Epistle
 to the *Corinth*: not onely that there was
 no suche degree of Bishopps ordeyned by
 the Apostles, as immediatly after ward
 was brought into the Church, after the
 times of y apostles: neither y ther was
 any such allowed of the Apostle, to wit,
 y ther should be one degree of a bishop,
 and an other of a minister, or that some
 man should be called a Bishoppe, not in
 respect of a flock, but in respect of his fel-
 low elders. For who doubteth, but that
 the

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the Apostle, would haue gyuen this counsel vnto the *Corinthians*, or himselfe would haue perfourmed it, or haue attributed it to *Cephas* or *Apollo*. if (which thing *Hierome* hath written to *Euagrius*, and in his commentaries vpon the first Epistle to *Titus*) he had iudged this remedie profitable, much more necessarie, for the byrdling of Schismes: But whether it were lawfull, to ordayne this degree in the Church, or not (for of this I like not now to dispute) that thing is not only apparant out of *Hierom*, vpon y^e epistle to *Titus*, y^e Bishops are greater than ministers, rather by custome, than by the truth of the Lords appoyntment: But also by witnesses which these men (as greater than all exception), are accustomed to alleadge, as *Lucius* y^e Pope, *Clement* the second, *Anacletus* (vnlesse their Epistles be rather counterfaite, which yet these men cite for authentical.) *Lombard* in his fourth booke of sentences the 24. distinct: *Gratian*, and to be short *Cardinall Cusan*, in his booke of the vniuersall vnitie, & *Platina*, in the life of Pope *Bonifacius* y^e third: al which plainly

ly

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Reuel. 13. 1.
Reuel. 14. 9.

ly witnesse, that all this Hierarchicall or
priestlike gouernment aboue ministers
was deuised by men, after the erample
of the Roman empyre, that is to say, that
it is the true Image of the beast, described
in the reuelation of Iohn. For whose cause
some, in the beginning also did trauaile
which ment not to performe that which
afterward insued. The thing it selfe in
fine, taught vs, that it was a matter of
great importance to decline, euen but a
nailes bredth from the word of God.

The conclu-
sion of the
disputation,
touching the
succession of
persons, sun-
dred from
the succelli-
on of doc-
trine.

[a] That is some
fearefull & terri-
ble thing.

Now, for as much as these thinges be
so, that is, seeing neither this succession
of persons, is a sufficient, true and pro-
per marke of the Church, nor (though
we should graunt it such) pertayneth a-
ny thing at all, to this popishe vizard.
What is then the matter, wherein we
see some at this day so greatly to sticke,
that no small number (as though
[a] Gorgons head were caste in the
way), goe backe? Merely this is the
strength of the spirite of error, that they
which are proued and pure, may be
made manifest.

Now let vs heare also, suche an other
testi-

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testimonie of their impudencie: they wil haue that to be iudged a Church, where there continueth an ordinary calling, to the holy ministerie. But what other thing is this, than (after the example of that hostise of *Chalcis*) to set before vs againe, the same meate new drest: Notwithstanding, because here againe, I see some sticke as it were at a rocke, and that, not without danger of shipwreck: I will indeuour and that as it were by the wind of truth, hence to deliuer them, that are cast vpon this coast.

Truely, if a man bid them declare vnto vs, what they vnderstand, by the name of ordination, (which requeste in this question, is altogether honest and verie necessarie) then the clawes of these Lions, wil openly shew themselves. They will alleadge, that of the Apostle: *How shall they preach vnlesse they be sent: and that saying: All things ought to be done in the house of God, rightly and in order. We agree vnto it. They will say, that, all that order is comprehended, in the olde Canons, which may not or ought not, by any meanes be broken.*

That the canonicall ordaining of Ministers, is not a perpetuall and necessary mark of the Catholique Church.

Pastors must in deede, alwayes be sent by the Lorde, but there is not alwayes a like order of their sending

Rom. 10. 15.
1. Cor. 14. 40

First,

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First, we answered, that it is playne, by the comparison of the very *Canons*, that one, and the same order in the Christian Churches, neither alwayes hath beene prescribed, nor euerie where kept: and that also, the diuersitie of circumstances, cannot suffer this, that one order in these things, shoulde be euerie where, and alwayes exactly obserued: and therefore very vnseasonable, is the obseruation, euen of the moste auncient and best *Canons* required, as absolutely and necessarilie to be kept. And if they be here so impudent, that they will deny this thing, truely I will conuince them as manifest offenders. For, if it be vnlawfull, to omit any thing of the *Canons* without any exception? From whence commeth that greate gaine, vnto the court of Rome, by dispensation also euen with the law of God: neither truely wil I easely suffer my self, to be thrust from this exception.

Although the canonically ordination be established for a perpetuall marke of the catholique church, yet it reproveth the false church of Rome.

a But go to, we are content here to do these men a pleasure, let vs therefore say (the disputation of this exception being deferred) that vocation is an order, not onely

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onely agreeable to the worde of God, but also euen to the verie auncient pure *Canons*, by which an ecclesiasticall office, is committed to some man. Let vs graunt them also (yet with no preiudice of the truth) that there also the true Church is to be seene, where this order continueth sound and pure, yet I say, that by that meanes, it most certainly appeareth that that Popishe Church is, nothing lesse than that catholique church, whose name it chalengeeth to hir selfe: For tell me, what is this order: to wit, that a lawfull knowledge of learning, and of manners going before, and the order of ecclesiasticall degrees beeing not rashly violated: some man (by the free consent of any whole Church, touching which question is) being appointed to this holy ministerie, is ordained by the, of whom he ought, that is, is put into the possession as it were of his office. And if anie man breake this order, that is, if a fault happen, either in the examination, or in the election, all the pure *Canons* commaund, all that, to be iudged of no effect: and so they subiect him, that ordaineth

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neth the minister, to moste græuous punishmentes. That this is so, they them selues cannot denie. Wherefore I woulde not load many leaues, with the alleadging of *Canons*.

Now let these men come forth, and let them alleadge vnto vs, even one amongst all their clergie, in whome this order, hath beene thoroowly obserued. I demaund not, whether these thinges, prescribed both by the word of God, and also by the pure *Canons*, haue bene exactly obserued of them now a long time. But this I aske, whether there be any vse of election, amongst them in the most places, seeing that y^e Romish harlot, hath couenaunted with Kings & Princes, for the abolishment of it, and suffereth those bargaines to be printed, and set out to sale. Now where there remaineth any shew of election, woulde a man haue thought any of them, coulde haue beene so impudent, y^e they shoulde be so bold, as to denie, that those offices which the whole world knoweth, are openly gotten by purchase: and that by buying free voyces (which thing is specially

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cially practised, amongst them that seke
for priesthood, and Canonickall persons
(as they call them, that is to say a-
mongst swine and asses, which are al-
together uncleane beastes) to be so bold
I saye, as to denie it, to be anye other
thing, than an abhominable treading
vnder foote of all law, both Gods owne,
and of that purer part of the canon law
(as they call it): And of the triall, both
of doctrine and maners, the lawfull wit-
nesses, for sooth, be those wicked men,
getting their living by no other means
but by dayly and open periuries, partly
in the prouinces of the Church of Rome,
partly, in the lappe of that Romish har-
lotte. And this thing for sooth the high
Bishops know not, which begin their
bulles with these wordes. *The honestie*
of life and maners, vppon which commen-
ding the same vnto vs, by a credible testimo-
nie, &c. What say I: their lawes of gi-
uing, either ordinarie, or falling out
vpon some (as they call them): and the
lawes of resignation, where were they
devised, braied, strained out, & at length,
set out and deliuered, to make mad, all
both

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both the highest and the lowest, but in the deuilles kitchen: And yet these men forsooth, will procure the Ecclesiasticall calling, to remaine in their possession.

That the false clergie of Rome doth rashly dispute against vs, for the laying on of hands.

But againe let vs heare that, that may more conuince these mens shamelesnesse. When they dispute with vs of a calling, they are wont to brge the laying on of hands, as though the true difference of a lawfull and counterfaite calling consisted in that. But I suppose, these good men haue not forgotten, that which I euen now saide, to wit, that by al the old canons, his ordination should be iudged of no force, who hath not bene lawfully examined and chosen, and they that ordeyne suche, to be subiect also to very greuous punishment. And therefore they doe vainely challenge vnto them selues that, which is no where found amongst them.

That no Pastors are ordeyned by the laying on of hands, but being alredy ordeined, are put into the possession of their office and commended vnto God.

Moreover this also they should know, that Pastours, are not made by the laying on of hands, but being ordeined by a lawfull calling (which is the voyce of God) are so commended, and put into possession of the ministry. For, whereas they

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they reckon, this ceremony of laying on of handes, amongst sacramentes, by the same reason that they reckon baptisme, and the supper of the Lord: we say, that it is altogether a vaine dotage, seeing there is no expresse commaundement of that ceremonie extant, neither is there ioyned vnto it, any sacramentall promise, neyther doe we reiect, eyther this ceremony, or iudge to bee vnprofitable the prayers of the church, commending and as it were, offering vnto God, the Pastor that hee hath sent them, for the sending of God, is a lawfull calling. But here surely, it falleth out with these hypocrites, as it hath in other things also, to wit, that those things being omitted, in which a true calling consisteth (that is to say the trial of doctrine, and of life, and a lawfull election of the whole Church) they sticke in the outward ceremony, whiche ceremonie also they haue defiled, with infinit vicelike rites: that I may let passe, that horrible sale of benefices and treading vnderfoote of the old canons, made, touching the multiplication of benefices (as they call them)

2

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them) and touching ordination, by ouerleaping (as they speake of inferior orders.) And yet notwithstanding, they themselves are not ignorant, that, by the full consent of the ancient Synodes, not onely ordination, but also, other better parts of a calling, are, by y^e meanes, iudged of no force.

That euen a lawfull ordination, is not a perpetuall and altogether a necessarye marke of the true church, eyther Catholique or particular.

But goe to, let vs put the case also, that all these men, were both lawfullye chosen and ordeined. Shal therefore their congregation be the catholique church, or not rather a denne of theues, if in abusing their calling, they turne lighte into darkenesse, and perfbourme this one thing alone, to make slaues to Sathan, the sheepe, that shoulde bee brought to Christe? And yet if forsooth, the head of his falsse Church doe this (as what els I pray you doth he?) he will not endure this, that he may be iudged of any mortall man. For so these men haue beene bolde, now a long time, not onely to speake, but also to write. And if this bee playnely to play the Antichrist: what is this Catholique Church (I beseech you) of which Antichrist is the head?

Where

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Wherefore, (that I may at the length conclude this place) I suppose, that these two thinges, doe nowe sufficiently appeare, that neither a base succession of persons, nor the obseruation of an outward vocation, is that necessarye, and perpetuall marke, of the true Church,

The conclusion of the whole former disputation, of the personal succession & ordination.

which the Logitians call proper after the [4] fourth sort. Neither al though it shoulde be so, doe these things at any thing at al, belong to the Church of Rome. (such as now it is) that is vnto the Pope: but rather what arguments soeuer conuince the Church of Antichrist, the same doe so euidently appeare in this Harlot, that, he that would not acknowledge, flye from, and detest her, as an adulteresse forsaken of her husbände, true ly, must either nothing regarde these things or else be without all vnderstanding.

[a] That is, whiche agreeth to euery one of the kind, onely to the kind, and always to the kinde: as to be apt to laugh, agreeth to all men, to men only, and alwaies to them, and to euery particuler of that kinde.

Nowe, because we haue determined, not onely to set out the false markes, (which thinges wee suppose wee haue done:) but also, to poynte out as it were

A true definition of the true church, and a proper, necessary and perpetuall marke of the same.

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With the finger, the true and proper
markes of the Church. So to let vs at-
tempt this latter point. We say there-
fore, that a true definition of a true
Church, eyther particularly, or vniuer-
sally considered, is that, by which it is
said to be a congregation, that confesseth
the true Jesus Christe: their onely sau-
our. For we say, that Jesus Christe, is
that onely foundation, of that true spiri-
tuall house of God: Jesus Christ onely,
is the soule of that mysticall bodie: Jesus
Christe onely, is the square of that build-
ing.

The true
Christe must
be discerned
from the
false, by the
onely wri-
tinges of the
Prophets &
Apostles.

The aduersaries will answer, that
they also acknowledge, and preache the
same thing. Therefore we do adde (see-
ing there be many false Christes) that
we dispute of the true Christe. These
men also will replie, that they haue
done, and do the same. In the third place
therefore we adde, that he is in deed the
true Christ, that hath most fully reuea-
led him selfe, by the mouth of his Pro-
phets and Apostles. And the mouth of
the Prophetes and Apostles, we inter-
pret to be, their authentick writings,
wherein

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wherin we affirme, are most fully, and most perfectly comprehended all the pointes of the Christian faith, partly plainely, and partly by necessary consequences to be gathered thereof.

For, we beleue it, to be as absurd, to thinke, that the Apostles were ignorant of some thing, of the misteries of christianitie, or not to haue reuealed all thinges vnto the worlde (both which Tertulian hath iustly accounted, verie greate pointes of madnesse): as not to haue put in writing, all things necessarie to saluation: or, to be short, not so to haue put them downe, that, either they should not be plaine inough of themselves, or, if any thing be written somewhat more obscure, their true interpretation shoulde be els where sought, than out of their very writings. But here we haue the aduersaries manifestly disagreeing from vs, yet not at all. neither those which like shamelesnesse. For there be that graunt both these thinges, that is to say, that the Apostles knew perfectly all the doctrine of saluation, and taught all the same most faithfully vnto the

that the true Christ must therefore be perfectly knowne by the writings of the Apostles & prophets, because they did fully and plainly, both know and teach the whole Christian religion, and the same Prophetes and Apostles, do yet in their writings teach it vnto vs.

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Church: which thing in deed they iustly graunt, for as much as Christ him selfe, in the 15. of Iohn and the 16. 13. witnesseth this in most plaine wordes: And Paule in the 21. 27. of the Actes. Galatians, 1. 8. Hebrews. 1. 1. otherwise it should be false, at least in some part, which the same Apostle speaketh: to wit, That the Church is builded vppon the foundation of the Prophetes and Apostles: And that, which he witnesseth of the holy scriptures. 2. Timot. 3. 16. 17. Moreover, that shall be false to, which the same Apostle saith: That the Church, is the pillar of truth. Unless all truth beeing ingrauen in that pillar should be manifest. Other some, more shamelesse, suppose there is left vnto these men, whom they call the successours of the Apostles, I know not what excellent thing, and that they doe affirme so assuredly, that they hold, they can not be deceiued in that matter, whose opinion I suppose, needeth not at this time, amongst men of sound iudgement, any confutation.

1. Tim. 3. 15.

But, in the ouerthrow of these two latter, and especially of the last point, I
per.

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perceiue, that all these men, are altogether of one opinion against vs. For they vrge, I knowe not what vnwritten worde, which they call Apostolicall traditions. And verely I do not vnwillingly graunt vnto them, that all thinges were not seuerally put downe in writing, according to the circumstances of times, place and persons, which were obserued, either by the Apostles, or by their consent, in the very forme and order of the seruice of God.

But who wil graunt, that we must thinke the same, of the decrees of the beerie doctrine it selfe? Finally, when the aduersaries are bidden to bring forth, what these pointes be, then that lying spirit bewraiethe himselfe, because those thinges, which they will haue deliuered from hand to hand, could neither by word nor writings, haue bene deliuered by the Apostles, but they should dissent from themselves. But euen al the fathers of sound iudgement, haue iudged farre other wise, of the most excellent, and moste sound perfection of the holy scriptures, with whose testimonies being

VWhat we ought to think of the vnwritten word.

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being a thousand times alleadged, I thought it not good now to fill these leaues.

The interpretation of the vvritten vvord, is not else vvhere to be fet, then from the vvorde it selfe, to wit, by comparing of the places one vvith another: and out of the analogie or proportion of the articles of our sayth.

There remaineth the question to be handled, touching the interpretation of the scripture. Which truely is so testified to and fro by these men, that they cannot eschew the sinne of blasphemie. There be I confesse some places of the scripture (partly through the ignorance of tongues, partly also, through other faults of our owne) so dark vnto vs, even vnto this day, that as yet even the most learned interpreters, and such as be of best conscience, cannot thoroughly agree what should be the proper & natural meaning thereof. There be some thinges also, in the holy scriptures, so profoundly spoken, that euery one maye not lawfully proceede so farre. To be short, there be some thinges also vvritten in such terms, that (as *Augustin* saith) it shold appeare the holy ghost would whet our diligence in the serching and meditating of them. And vntlesse the necessarie points of doctrine and Christian religion were so playnely and clearly: to be short, so familiarly

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miliarly declared in the writings of the Prophetes and Apostles, that they may be (the holy ghost being present amongst them, whereby God lightneth all his sayntes) manifestly vnderstode in the Church, to what end, shoulde the Lorde haue sent his hearers to the scriptures? Mea that more is, to what ende haue, both the Prophetes and Christe himselfe also, and the Apostles spoken, if they would not haue these thinges, to be vnderstood, which all ought to know?

I will speake something more boldly, which yet I hope I can proue. That we may consent vnto the points of Christian religion, as vnto true groundes, and muche more that wee may applye them vnto our selues, it behoueth surely that wee shoulde haue our eares elsewhere opened, a fleshly heart giuen vs, to be short, that we should elsewhere be taught than of flesh and blood, because the church, is the congregation of them, that must be taught of God, & to whome the arme of the Lord is reuealed: and that men may vnderstand, what the Prophetes and Apostles, haue brieely thought and taught, concerning

VVe cannot by naturall vnderstanding know, what the pointes of Christian religion are, but by the writings of the Prophetes and Apostles.

Esai. 53.1.

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concerning euery article of our religion, they haue neede, not onely of a wit in some measure sharpened, but also of the knowledge of tongues, and of careful and diligent reading.

Compre-
hension,
knowledge,
and full per-
swasio, must
be distin-
guished in
the holy
scriptures: of
which that,
to wit com-
prehension,
is naturall,
the other
is in deede
spiritual, but
also commo
to many re-
probates:
The third is
proper to
the children
of God.

For it is one manner of thing, to vnderstande, what this or that man sayth, then so to vnderstand the things, which thou doest perceiue, that thou also approve of them: and not onely that thou vnderstand what the thing is, but also wherefore it is: and comprehension is another thing, than knowledge, euen in prophane matters: and agayne in matter of diuinity this knowledge is another thing, than full perswasion, therefore comprehension belongeth vnto all men that are endued with some iudgement, and vnto knowledge, there is required also an outwarde lightning of Gods spirite, by reason of the blindenes of mans iudgment, which gift notwithstanding is common as well to many euil, as to many good men. But full perswasion, doth seperate the chosen children of God from the castawayes, and is the proper riches of the Saintes.

There.

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Therefore we require, the exposition of the worde of God, not onely as profitable, but also as necessary, yet not for the same cause, as these men thinke, neither yet wil wee fet it from y place, from whome these men suppose we wil take it, for they think that that worde is so darkly deliuered, that (as thogh it were some darke thing) it should neede light, fetcht elsewhere then from it selfe, and when we demand of them, from whence at the length this light should be fet, they lay vnto vs, y bizard or bare shewe of the Catholique Church, vnder which name sometimes, they lay before the ignorant, these or those of the Fathers: sometimes the fragments of particular or general counsels: to bee short, they lay before them very often, long custom for an argument that cannot bee refused, to which thinges, if a man doe not forthwith consent, he is now layde open to the slaughter of the outrageous people (no knowledge of his cause being had before) as thogh he were guilty of some heynous crime, committed against God or man, whereas in times past, he was condemned

In what points we doe at this day dissent, when the question is demanded, touching the interpretation of Gods word.

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condemned to bee burned, vnder some certaine colour of law.

And in deede this is now their zeale. But we, (that we may in one word declare all thinges which belong to this matter) say, that the Church of Christe, is a schoole, in which the worde of the Lorde is not onely barely to be read, as out of the letter written, but also to bee taught, that it maye bee rightly vnderstode, and so to be taught, that exhortations, corrections and consolations, both openly and priuately, maye bee vled, which in Paul is vnderstode by y name of Prophecyng. Moreover this also wee adde, which thing ought here chiefly to bee marked, that the interpretation of those scriptures, are to be set, no where else, then out of the scriptures themselves, not onely because the word of God, is able to giue credite to it selfe: but also, because that trueth is reuealed vnto vs no where els, then in y writings of y Prophetes and Apostles. For that saying of Austen is well known, and is most true, That the scripture is to be expounded by the scripture: Neither shall it

Rom. 12. 6.

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it irke me heere to put downe, that no notable place, out of the 49. Homelie, of the imperfect worke vpon Mathew, because it agreeth altogether with our times. He that will know (saith he) which is the true Church of Christ, let him not know it but onely by the scriptures. And by and by after. Christians therefore, beeing willing to receiue, the certaintie of true sayth, let them flie to nothing but to the scriptures, otherwise if they shall haue respect to other thinges, they shall stumble & perish, not vnderstanding, which is the true Church: and by this meanes they shall fall into the abhominacion of desolation, which standeth in the holy places of the Church.

But to whom shall belong (will these men say) the interpretation of scriptures? Merely all be not Prophetes, all be not teachers. But againe. Esayas crieth, that both Priestes and Prophetes, haue erred in their vision: neither would Christ haue admonished, That the leauen of the Pharises, should be auoyded, if we shoulde without exception, haue consented vnto them, That sit in Moses chayre: Neither should the false Prophetes be eschued, if all

Esay.

Math. 16. 6.

Math. 23. 2.

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all the Prophetes did speake the truth: neither would *Caiphas*, and the whole Synode of the Priestes, haue condemned Christ, if the holy Ghost, had beene tried without exception to those, that sit in *Aarons* seat: What then?

Antiquitye
or noueltye
maketh no-
thing at all,
to instruct
men to dis-
cerne the
true inter-
pretation of
Scripture
from the
false.

Let these men therefore heare at length, that which we haue so often times cryed out vnto deafe men: to wit, that we do not simply reiect, neither the old nor the new counsels, whether they be particular or generall, vnlesse they be plainly theeuish: that we do not simply refuse, neither old nor new writers, vnles they be manifestly, either superstitious or ridiculous, or by comon consent abrogated: That we doe not simply cast from vs, the writings, neither of auncient nor new writers, whether they be Ecclesiasticall or Laicall (as these men call them, for God is no acceptor of persons, and often times euen by the basest sorte, he confoundeth the pride of the most wise), vnlesse they be plainly wicked, superstitious or foolish. But this onely we require, which the most learned, and euery the most religious of the old

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old writers, monish carefully to be don,
to wit, that all these thinges, should be
diligently examined, according to the
rule of the written word of God. For
antiquitie and authoritie of those that
wryte, may in deed set some collour of
truth vpon falshood, but that it shoulde
be true, which disagreeeth neuer so little
from the writings of the Prophets and
Apostles, that truely it can neuer bring
to passe. Furthermore, experience it self
more than sufficiently declareth, that
there haue beene long time since, *builded*
vpon the foundation layd by the Apostles,
not onely bay and stubble, but also yron and
rust, to be short, lies vppon trueth: All
which thinges, muste at the length be
consumed by the light and fire of Gods
word.

Now least these men shoulde agayne
complaine, that what soeuer hath bene
established by counsell after consell, in
the auncient Church, shoulde by this
meanes be called into doubt: we confes,
that we doe acknowledge the Creedes,
which were alwayes approued by the
common consent of the whole Church,

The Creeds
of the anci-
ent Synodes
& the iudge-
ment of the
fathers a-
gainst here-
tiques, are at
no hand re-
iected by vs:
yea rather,
they are
strongly de-
fended a-
gainst ad-
uersaries al-
though not
as yeelding
credite
themselues.

D

to

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to wit, the Creed of the Apostles, Nice, Athanasius his creed, the creed of Constantinople, Chalcedon, together with the curses pronounced in the second counsel of Ephesus against Nestorius: And that we both with mouth and hart detest, at heresies, which either by open or secret consent of the whole Church, were out of y word of God, condemned in those 4. councils, and also over thowen, in the fifth and sixth councils of Constantinople: And also all other heresies whatsoever, which afterwarde, eyther newly sprung up, or are newly polished, not y the truth hangeth upon any Synods or Creedes, but because we acknowledge, that the thinges which are prescribed and established in them, may be rightly iudged, by the writings of the prophets and Apostles: so far of is it, y we take away the authority of y church, or dispise y consent of the godly, either ancient or new writers, which thing our aduersaries, falsly & shamelesly object unto vs.

The conclusion of the disputation of the true Christ, who is the only, true, perpetual, and absolute necessary note of the true Church.

Now the summe of al these things is this, that Christ is the true, perpetual, necessary: & to be short, the onely marke of

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of the Church: yea I say, the true Christ that is, such a one, as he from the beginning hath most perfectly (touching the matter and manner of saluation, revealed him selfe, both in the writings, of the prophets and of the Apostles. For that saying standeth sure: He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad: and that saying, that christ is that corner stone of the foundation, vppon whome the whole building riseth vp: And that onely head, which minisreth vnto his body, that is vnto the true catholique Church, al feeling and mouing: To be short, he is the dore, the way, the resurrection, and the lyfe. Therefore, whersoeuer y word is heard, as it ought to be, there indeed Christe raigneth, and where Christe raigneth, there in deed we iudge the Catholique, visible Church to be, neither tied to any certaine place, nor vnto the multitude: for where that dead carke is, to wit Christe crucified, there be those Egles: there is saluation, where that onely name is, in which we must be saued: there be the childezen of light, where that sonne shineth there be the true sheepe. Where the voyce of

Mat. 12. 13.

1. Pet. 2. 7.

Iohn. 10. 7.

Iohn. 14. 6.

Iohn. 11. 25.

Mat. 24. 28.

Act. 4. 12.

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Mat. 18. 20. that sheepeheard is heard, although two or three onely, throughout all the world, shall be truely gathered together in his name: And to speake in fewe wordes, where that true seede is sown, there is the Lords field: and there that haruest groweth, which shall neuer be burned.

But againe, because it falleth out, partly thorough the weaknesse of mans wit, even in the moste excellent men, partly thorough the wickenesse or negligence of the pastors, that scarce at any time, since y^e time of the Apostles, y^e doctrine of Christ, hath beene so preached in the Church, but that some blemish, hath priuely crept in, (which thing appeareth to bee done, even by the Epistles of the Apostles, and that whilest they also were living: Finally, because the Lord hath appointed, not onely that the worde shoulde be taught: but also that it shoulde not be taught of every man: And for this cause, hath appointed certaine lawes, touching this order. I must here againe declare two things: to wit, how farre it shoulde be necessarie, that that onely marke of the true Church,

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Church, that is to say, the preaching of Gods worde, shoulde be pure, and how much we should giue, to the ordination and succession of the Pastors themselves.

Therefore, as touching that former point, I put downe three thinges. One is, that although there be nothing set out vnto vs in the holy Scriptures, which is not most profitable and verie necessary as it were vnto saluation: yet there are certaine chiefe points, and as it were grounds of our religion, which are to be discerned from the rest. The second point is, that there haue beene some matters, which in times past haue beene rudimentes of the Catholique Church, and may in other times also be rudiments of some particular churches, yet for all that those points cease not, to belong to the true Church. The third is, that the religion and marke of the Church, either vniuersall or particular, is not to be measured by something, that this or that Pastor teacheth by worde or writing: neither by that, that some sheepe by themselves haue

How farre it is necessary that the doctrine of sayth, should be pure in the Church. that the Church whether particular or general, may be a true church.

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thought this: *Q* by the disputations of some, whether they be many or few, but by that doctrine, which is commonly received in the Churches, so that it be agreeable to the word of God.

That all the points of christian religion, are not of the foundation thereof.

John. 4. 3.

* They denied Christ, to haue come in the flesh.

* The Marcionistes of whome he speaketh here, did hold that Christ was not true man.

Now because these questions are called into controuersie, go to, let vs confirme them by sure reasons & examples. As touching the firste, the thing it selfe sheweth, y there may be variaunce touching some things, & yet the foundation of christian religion, remaine safe: And againe some things cannot be taken away, but that the whole building, be utterly ouerthrowen. He that denieth Christ to haue come in the fleshe, is not of God, but is the spirit of Antichrist. Therefore the companies of y * Doctores, of y * Marcionits, and of such like, be not the Church of Christe, whereby it is prooued, that the point, touching both the natures of Christe, is an article of Christian religion, belonging to the foundation. Againe, the Church of Ierusalem (wherin who was better learned, than Peter) knew not the calling of the vncircumcised, and yet what true Church was there

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there then in the worlde, if the Church of Ierusalem were not it? Therefore the point concerning the calling of the vn-circumcised, is not of it selfe, of the points of Christian religion, which concerne the foundation. Therefore, there is some difference betweene those thinges which are set forth vnto vs in the scriptures, to be beleued.

The second also may be proued, by a more euident example. For who doubteth, but that if euer there were any where, a true, and almost onely and wholly Catholique Church, that was Christes owne household, being conuersant and that according to the flesh, with those his twelue disciples? Who likewise is ignorant, that the point of the resurrection (the foundation wherof is the resurrection of Christ himselfe) is of so great waight, that the Apostle doth rightly pronounce, that (that beeing abolished) the whole fruit of the Gospell, shoulde be abolished: but y^e very congregation could scarce beleue, y^e Christ was yet risen. And Thomas gaue not credite, to his owne very fellow disciples: yea the

That there are some rudiments of particular Churches. VVhich thing also in times past fall out, in the Catholique church.

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disciples, would not haue belæued, euen their owne verve eyes, if the Lozde had not sayd, *A spirit hath not flesh and bones.*

Luke. 24. 39.

VVe may not determine of the falshood or truth of any church by the doubting of either many or few.

And that third thing is confirmed, by the examples of the Churches of *Achaia* and *Galatia*, which doubtlesse, the Apostle would not haue called the churches of Christ, and therefore true churches, if hee had therfore thought that the church of *Corinth* had denied that article of the resurrection of the flesh: & the churches of *Galatia*, had reieted the benefite of their liberty, purchased by Christe, because some in *Corinth*, yea perhaps some of the pastors themselves, did doubt of the poynte of the resurrection: and the most part of the *Galatians*, called backe agayn the vse of circumcision and other ceremonies, seeing that yet notwithstanding, the same Paul sayth: If ye be circumcised, Christ doth profite you nothing: and seeing that he affirmeth that those which vrged circumcision, not of ignorance, but of stubbornnes, they were removed alway vnto another gospel, & therefore he openly calleth the Apostatates or fallers away, and compareth them to Dogs, that

Gal. 5. 2.

Gal. 1. 6.

Phil. 3. 2.

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that is to say, to vncleane beastes. But it is an other thing. to erre through ignorance, than obstinately to resist the truth, as wifful fellows are wont. Heresie which is without the Church, if it be of some point of the religion, that toucheth the foundation, is an other thing, than being deceiued or an error, which requireth and suffereth it selfe to be taught. To be thorte, the Eclipse of the Sunne, is an other thing, than the absence of the same: and the euening is an other thing than the darknesse of the night: yea the night it selfe, which the day succeedeth, is an other thing than the darknesse were, *when they covered the depth.* Gen. 1.2.

These things then being put downe, That some it shalbe easie to iudge, that euery error may creepe into doth not take away the name of the true church, and with al that to be most the Catholique church yea and that false, which the aduersaries say, to wit, in some that the Catholique Church cannot erre, point of faith, which and yet that euery error doth not abolish the name of the Catholike Church. concerneth the foundation. For as touching this latter point, if some particular Church may erre, even

in

in some chiefe head or article of Christi-
an religion, and yet it ceaseth not ther-
fore to be a true Church: wherefore shal
not a man say the same of al particular
Churches, not considered one by one,
but vniuersally, for this is the Catho-
lique Church: Truely it is not probable
that there liued then any men (when
Christ rose againe) better or more per-
fectly instructed in true faith, then those
twelue Disciples: And yet we see this
whole congregation, for a time (as I e-
uen now sayd) so to haue doubted of the
resurrection of Christ, that for that cause
(as Luke writeth) Christ remayned with
them fortie dayes after the resurrection,
that he might fully assure them of his
resurrection. Wherefore this thing we
conclude, that the chiefe points of our
religion, ought of necessitie to remaine
sound, in the Catholique Church, that it
maye be called Catholique: But there
may some times fall in some cloud (spe-
cially through the negligence of the
Pastors) which may some times dar-
ken, one while this, an other while that
article, which neuer the lesse (when the
holy

A& 1.3.

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holy Ghost appeareth) straight wayes
vanisheth away.

Therefore Catholique is not, (as the
vnlearned imagine) alwaies and with
out exception the same, that right or
sound is, seeing that euen some vniuers-
sall error, may continue for a time. And
the same thing may and ought muche
more to be spoken of the particular
congregations of this vniuersallitie.
And if these things be true, euen in the
very grounds of our religion: how much
more, may we thinke the same to bee
true, as often as errors creepe in, by
which the very foundations of religi-
on, are not ouerthrowne: And this is the
strubble or chaffe which sometimes (as S.
Paul sayth, are builded vpon the foundati- 1. Cor. 3. 12.
ons of the Apostles, which at the length
shall vanish away, when the day of the
Lord appeareth.

But this day sheweth it selfe some-
times sooner, somtimes later. (So I had
almost sayde, all the Bishops of Africa
thought with Cyprian, that baptisme ad-
ministrated by heretikes, was of no force.
Which thing, although it were false,
might

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might neuertheles (so long as the sum of fayth remayneth sound and unhurt) be wrongfully taught and beleued. But this error continued not long. There is a like consideration to be had of many traditions, which for that cause, began at the length, falsely to be called, and to be deemed Apostolicall, because that being once confirmed by continuall vse, they were supposed to haue come euen from the Apostles them selues: which traditions also, by reason therof, the day of the Lorde (which hath againe in our times shined forth) cannot now abolish, without very great contentions. Be it therefore farre from any to thinke, that for such maner of blemishes, some congregations should be thought, not to belong, to the bodye of the Catholique Church, although godly and diligent Pastors, shoulde giue very great diligence, that these spottes also shoulde be wiped away, with the sponge of Gods word.

That blemishes at the first sometimes tolerable, cease to be blemishes, and grow to be cankers.

But this thing first of al must here be marked, that these blemishes and as it were byles or swellings, do some times

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so farre increase, that they growe to a canker, and that they pull away the very members from the body: which thing the most shamefull examples, both of auncient times, and also of our times, declare to haue fallen out, especially by the fault of the pastors. As for example, exorcisme or cuniuring (one sort of it being proper to them that were possessed with ill spirites, and an other common to all that were growen in yeares, and came from Paganisme to Christianitie, brought in also by the negligence of pastors, into the baptisme of Infants, that were borne of Christians) was at the beginning onely a blemish, and yet not being looked into of the old Bishoppes, at the length increased so farre, that in the papacie it was retained as necessarie, and so became a willworship, a matter now at no hand indifferent: And in some Churches, (although lightened with the Gospell) it is retayned as not vnprofitable, with great shame (truely) to the pastors: of so great importance is it in season to pzeuent, even the smallest errors.

The

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The ceremonie of anoynting with oyle in baptisme (which was ministred to those that were as it were, to fight against the Deuil, and the flesh) was in the beginning chaffe, but this chaffe, how farre in processe of time it grew, we see, when the Crisme also began to be revered, which thing notwithstanding did not fal out in the very wa-
ter, a true and an essential signe of baptisme. So it is manifest, that the signe of the crosse, was at the beginning an open profession of christianitic, the abuse wherof at the last, brought to passe, that the very crosse, was set vp, in the place of Christ crucified, neither is there any idolatry in all the worlde more detestable. So the remembrances of martyrs, and the funerals of the more famous Bishops, were celebrated, both with Prayers in the praise of the, and with incredible concourse of people, from whence by and by after sprang up innovations of the dead, at their sepulchers, and in processe of time, the worshippings of reliques also. The pain-
ting of walles, brought into the Christians

Chrisme in
baptisme
preluded be-
fore water,
the element
of the sacra-
ment.

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stians temples, about foure hundred
yeares after the deathe of Chziste,
and that without any woꝛship thereof,
was in deed accounted, haie. But howe
farre this blemish hath growne we see,
inso much, that the second of the ten com
mandements, was vnder that colour, o
penly by the Papissts blotted out: and
(which thing cannot bespoken, without
the incredible shame of some) that se
cond commandement, is also at this day
numbred, by certein men (which should
not so deale) amongst the ceremoniall
commandementes. Such was in the be
ginning, the lenten fast, and some choise
oꝛ difference of meates, without any o
pinion of woꝛship, added therto. Which
things, we nowe see so established, that
sundrye and those no small persons, but
such as wil seeme to be most Catholike,
do most obstinately defende, that in the
doing of them, consisteth in some respect,
the forgiuenesse of sinnes, yea the woꝛ
thinnesse of merites oꝛ power to deserue.
What I beseech you, coulde seeme at the
first, to haue been moze indifferent then
foꝛ the celebꝛation of the supper, to haue
a table

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* That is,
their Altars
dedicated to
Deuils.

a table of stone or of wood: But, if the Grecians in the celebration of the saide supper, had neuer vsed their *βωμῶς* and the Latines their Alters, but had beene content with their cōmon tables (which was in vse in the Apostles times) likely it is, that the controuersie, touching that detestable idolatry of y^e masse (by which we see, the whole worlde at this day, to be set on fire) could neuer haue sprung vp.

Now, to what end, tend these things: to wit, that first in descrying the marks of the true church, heresies might be distinguished from errors, and haue a stubble, from those things, which eyther of themselves, or by reason of the opinion of worship brought in, are either vngodly or superstitious: and yet that all the gouernours of y^e Church, ought to vnderstand, that as the alter, was not in time past to be builded of stones, garnished by the diligence of man: neither yet that it was lawfull for them, so much as to fasten a naile in the Tabernacle, but according to the paterne which Moses had seene in the mount: euen so now also, all
godly

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godly magistrates indeede, and all true shepheards, ought to endeuour; that in restoring the temple of the Lord, by so many means fallen down, they shoulde not onely restore those thinges, which haue beene ouerthrowne by *Antichrists*, but also that they should most diligently wipe awaye all, euen the lightest spottes, that haue proceeded from the same *Antichrists*, although they be, as it were wahren hard vpon the walles of the temple: and that marking (partly by the story of former ages, and partly by the beholding of the present ruins of the Church) these former euils of Satan, they should at no hand suffer themselues to be mocked, by the allegation of the fragmentes, of certaine of the auuncient fathers, or by any bayn shew of custom: but rather that they should not leaue of, vntill by doctrine, both the Ceremonies and all the Ecclesiasticall gouernment also, be apted, not vnto some figuratiue Image of shew, which was needfvl vnder the scholemasterhip of the law, but exactly framed, according vnto y^e moste perfect paterne, which the sonne of God

E him

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him selfe by his owne mouth & his Apostles after him, haue mosse perfectly set forth vnto vs in their writings. But concerning this matter, we wil elsewhere speake more fully (as I hope) when we shal answere those notable meane men, who reprehend vs, as ouer seuerer exactors of y^e work, & especially whē we shal seuerally answere, vnto the writing of *Cassander*, to the end, al men may vnderstand, that none more hinder the worke of the Lorde, than these *Samaritans*.

VVhich be
the principal
points of the
Catholique
faith or religion.

Now, because I see some (not yielding vnto these things, which we haue spokē in general, cōcerning y^e fundamental or principall points of our religion) again to demānd what those shold be: I answer y^e these articles are to be called grounds or principles, which being laid, y^e whole building remaineth: & which being ouer thrown, al things builded therupon fall to y^e ground. And al these things, we profess to haue bene described wth great shortnesse & plainnes, out of the word of God in y^e Creed, which they cal the Apostles. Which thing ought to be added to y^e ten commandements, & the Lords praier of
the

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the which, that, to wit, y^e ten commaundments, doth verie compendiously set out the order of Christian life: and this, that is, y^e Lords praier, doth very briefly also set out, right inuocation and praier. This (I say) is y^e fundamental, true, and perpetuall mark of y^e Catholike church, which shall neuer bee blotted out vnto the worlds end: but which neuerthelesse ought to be expounded, out of the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, from whence it is taken, that al men may vnderstand it and keepe it, as much as in them lyeth.

Now the order of this exposition is 2. What exposition of Catholique doctrine is required in the Church.
fold: one more familiar, which is necessary for al men: an other more large, and far more plentiful: as we see that the Apostles creed, was after wardes expounded, by some other Creedes of the holy Synodes, that heresies might bee met withall, & the Consciences established more and more in sound doctrine. Therefore, albeit that to the ende, that some man might be a true member of Christ, it be not necessary, that he should most exactly vnderstande, for what cause
2 things

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things are spoken and set downe, and should know the determinations of disputations in diuinitie: Yet euery one ought to know according to his capacitie, what he doth beleue, and why he doth beleue, and not to rest in the deuillish inuention of faith, which they call vnfolded, that is to beleue, as the Church hath determined, and to aske no further: but to adde also vnto that familiar instruction, the exposition of holy writings, of which Paul setteth before vs foure pointes 2. Tim. 3. to wit, doctrine, reproofe, correction, and comfort. All which are by diligent Pastors and teachers, publikely and priuately, to be applied, to the capacities of the beleeuers.

That the true, yea the Catholique church hath more then once wanted, an ordinary and lawfull ministry, and therefore that that ordinary and lawfull ordination and succession of Pastors, was for a time broken off.

It remayneth that we declare, howe much we ought to giue to personal succession and ordination. We haue sayde, that the onely, true, perpetuall, and necessary marke of the catholique Church is that doctrine, which diuersly, and sundry maner of wayes, first by worde, and after ward by writings, hath bene deliuered by the Prophetes, and at the last

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last most perfectly declared by Chriſte him ſelfe, and that by his owne mouth, and by his Apoſtles. For this word, as (euen after Chriſte him ſelfe), Peter ſayth, is that ſeede, by which the Catholique Church, both at the beginning of the world appeared, and by which alſo it ſhall continue, euen vnto the ende of the world. But ſeed is to no purpoſe, except it be ſowen, and the Lorde, (who both vnder the olde, and vnder the new Teſtament, appoynted an order for the ſowing of this ſeed, by the miniſtry of men) hath (I ſay) neceſſarily appointed this ſowing (for otherwiſe the ſpreading abroade of this Church woulde quickly end) to endure to the ende of the world. Be it ſo truely. Then thou wilt ſaye, ordination alſo and ſucceſſion of thoſe perſons, is a true, perpetuall, and neceſſary mark of the catholike church, agreeing altogether with that other, to wit, the mark of ſowing. So our aduerſaries do conclude, but falſly and fooliſhly. For, (that I may let paſſe thoſe two thinges already confuted by vs, that is to ſay, becauſe they babble of the ſucceſſion

sion of persons, omitting the succession of that Apostolicall doctrine: Moreover because y they propound an other succession, than that which hath beene begun by the Apostles them selues) either they do not see, or they dissemble that they do see (albeit the sowing also, and the sowers, are required no lesse than the seede, to the tilling of this fielde of the Church) that the same order hath not alwaies bene kept, either of sowing the seed, or of ordaining them, unto whome this sowing is committed. And this notwithstanding, they ought to haue learned, both by the fore tellings of the prophetes, and also by the holy histories, which things remaineth to be proued of vs. The Church therfore I confesse, was neuer without y worde of God. But let these men also shew vs, that there hath bene some one, certaine, & perpetual order both of that sowing, & of the persons admitted to that sowing, and that the same hath bene tied also at all times, to the same lawes of ordination, before that first the lord had consecrated to himselfe the first begotten. *Exod. 3. 2. and 19*

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22. and the 24. 5. in whose stead after-ward that *Leuiticall* priesthood was ordained, almost with infinit ceremonies. Num. 8. 18. Therfore then at the length began, that certaine & ordinary order of succession & ordination, that is, of solwing, and of those vnto whom the charge of that solwing was committed. Which succession, and which manner of ordaining, if before that time the Church lacked it, it is proued, that that ordinary succession and calling, hath neither bin alwaies necessary nor continual, seeing that the visible Church stood so many ages, before both of them.

Now let vs see, whether y^e *Leuiticall* priesthood, hath continued without interruption, euen vnto y^e coming of Christ. In deed we read, y^e the spreding abraod of *Aarons* posterity, continued vntill the ouerthrow of the temple. But euen as we say, thogh *Dauids* stocke were not abolished, yet *Dauids* kingdome (euen as amongst other the prophets, *Ezechiel* had foretold) was broken of, frō the dayes of *Sedichia*, vnto *Zorobabel*, frō whose times in stead of kings they were Dukes, and

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Gen. 49. 10.

at the lengthe (the *Asmoney*, taking all power vnto themselues) *Dauids* posterity, I say, in steede of *Dukes* became *Senators*, vntill at last they being also taken away by *Herod*: a forrainer bozne, and *Iudea* being reduced to a *Province*, and so in fine as *Iacob* had foretold (all government being taken from *Iudea*) y some of *Dauid* sprang by, to sit in the throne of *Dauid* for euer: So it appeareth, that all the *Leuiticall* priesthooe, was not at once broken off, vntil (the eternal priesthood of *Melchizedech* succeeding) it was wholly abolished. For, (to let passe those publique miseries and slaughters of the people, vnder the iudges, and especially that time which is spoken of, in the five last chapters of the story of the *Judges*, in which time it is euident that the publique ministry was greatly decayed, and sometimes almoste abolished) who will deny, that there was any true church, in the kingdome of the ten tribes, from the time of *Ieroboam* the first king, vnto the ouerthrow of *Samarita*: and yet that there was no succession, nor ordination of *Leuitical* priesthooe amongst them, appeareth

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reth by this, because it is writtē of *Leui*, that he departed from y^e kingdome of the ten tribes: and by that same most heauy complaynt of *Helias*, which is reported by the Apostle, *Rom. 11. 2.* for concerning that which is reported afterwardes of these hundred prophetes, hid in a caue. *1. Kings. 18. 13.* it doth not prooue, that there was there, any ordinarie ministry.

The aduersaries will reply, that the godly *Israelites* went to *Ierusalem*, and therefore, that they pertained to the *Leuiticall* priesthode. Bee it so that some went, yet there was some true Church then, in the kingdome of the ten tribes, not going to the Citie, neyther vsing the ordinarie sacrifices, nor reteining anye vse of the *Leuiticall* priesthode.

But agayne these men say, they had notwithstanding colledges of prophets, and assemblies of Godly men also, at their appointed dayes, as appeareth namely out of the *2. Kings. 4. 23.* and therefore the ordinary succession of the ministry, did not then cease. And neyther doe I conclude out of this place, that

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that there was then no holy ministry in the kingdome of *Israell*. But this one thing I gather, that the succession of the *Leuiticall* ministry (which was the onely ordinarie ministerye) was then all together broken off, in the kingdome of *Israell*. For neither were the *Prophetes* ordained by the ministry of men, neither was their order continuall.

They will againe reply, that an ordinary succession may cease, in particular Churches: but at no hand in the Catholique church, that is to say, vniuersally: seeing that then also the temple continued in the kingdome of *Iudab*. But beside that, I can replie out of the testimonie of the *Prophetes*, that *Iudab* so behaued hir selfe, not onely in maners, but also in the very worshippe of God, that she iustified *Israell* hir selfe: and that also the temple of the *Lorde* was shut vp vnder *Manasses*, after that it had beene imbrued, with the blood of the *Prophetes*: and that horrible idolatry declared vnto *Ezechiell* in a vision: beside these things I say, I furthermore adde
two

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two other : one is, that if some particular Church may be a member of the catholique Church (without the marke of succession, and ordinary ordination) it necessarily followeth that those notes, are not that, which the *Logicians* call proper, after the fourth sort: that is to say, a terme that alwayes agreeth vnto one kinde, and to euery particular of the same kind, whereof we now demaund, and in deed doe iustly demand it, seeing the whole force of the definition, consisteth properly, in the knowledge of the difference. The other is, that if (which thing we haue shewed before) some parte of the Catholique Church, may lacke that succession, and ordinary ordination for a tyme, it followeth that that thing maye fall out in all particular and seuerall Churches. For why shoulde it fall out to one, rather than to an other? But where this thinge shall fall out, in what generall thing I praye you, maye a man finde that, which he wanteth not in all and euery singular parte of the same?

But

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But least these men should agayn cry out, that yet that thing hath not fallen, which might haue fallen out. Let vs proceede further, and let vs consider, what the state of the Cotholike Church was, vnder the captiuitie of Babilon. We rely these men shall neuer proue, that there was then any ordinary ministry of the Leuites. For the fable of *Susanna* is confuted, out of the true story of *Daniel*, so that it must be a narration either fabulous, or meereley allegoricall: euen as also the booke of *Iudith* is. And though *Ezechiel* sometimes in some place, exercised the office of a Prophete (as it is manifest by his Prophecies) yet by that it shall at no hande bee proued, that the Leuiticall Priesthooe was not discontinued.

But thou wilt say, Circumcision then continued. I graunt it, for this was the singuler benefite of God: euen as Satan could not (in our time, and in the time of our Fathers) bring to passe, but that the Sacrament of Baptisme shoulde remaine. But the selfe same Circumcision was not vsed those forty yeeres, being

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ing the time of their wandering in the wildernes, where notwithstanding if the Catholike Church were not, it was no where. Being therefore the Church may for a time want some sacraments, truely this part of the publique ministration, is not absolutely, the perpetuall and necessary marke of the Church: which thing yet cannot be sayde, of the seede of the word it selfe, for the patent it selfe of a couenaunt, is another thing, than the seale put to the patent it selfe: so that the church, may for a time lacke this, by reason of many letts cast in the way: but that, to wit, the worde, it can never lacke, although he that dispiseth that, to wit the Sacrament, despiseth both, and therefore shall worthily bee iudged out of the Couenant.

What then? truely the Church, can neither at any time lack the seeds of the word, neither the sowing, nor the sowers: but yet the sluggishnesse and wickednes of the Pastors chiefly hindereth, that we cannot restraine both the sowing and the sowers to an ordinarie succession and calling. And this thing falleth

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leth out, by two meanes. By one, when the chayres or places be not empty, but they which sit in them, haue entred in, either by the doore, or by the window, and do either wholly neglect their dutie, or mingle cockell with seed, or els sowe nothing but poyson: as such was the state of y^e ancient catholique church, vnder the mosse parte of the vacant governments of the iudges: afterwards in *Juda* vnder the mosse of y^e kings, and at the length, in the times of Christ being conuersant vpon the earth. By the other, whē as that ordinary both sowing, and also ordinary calling of sowers ceaseth, being for a time as it were, more than halfe dead (for we doe not acknowledge that these things, can all together be abolished before the ende of the worlde) and such was, as we haue sayd, the outward forme and face of the Church of the tenne Tribes, and of the Catholique Church, in the captiuitie of *Babylon*.

I say therefore, that the very same thing, hath some times thorow the iust iudgement of God, fallen out in the Church,

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Churche, in respect of the sowing, and the sowes, which often times falleth out in the times of famine and warre, to wit, that there is utterly no place for sowing. Which when it cometh to passe al do not yet die, but the hunger staruen that remaine, are relieved, by the fruits gathered in the haruest of the former yeares, euen as heretofore, in the times of Ioseph, the Egyptians did sow nothing, but in the very seventh yeare of the famine. So it behoued Daniell, Ezechiell, Zorobabell, Ezra, Nehemia, and the remnant of the godly in Babylon, when an ordinary ministry was wanting, to be Prophets and Pastors vnto themselves, ioyning with most feruent praies the continuall reading and meditation of the holy scriptures, as in that story, we reade to haue bene done, vnlesse we woulde rather say, that Moses and the other Prophets (whose writings were then extant, although they them selues were dead long a goe) were notwithstanding their Pastors in this exile, vntill the Lord in his time, should haue mercy vpon vs.

But

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That the
mark of suc-
cession and
ordinarie
vocation, is
not aboli-
shed, by e-
uery fault
that may fall
out in the
minister.

But amongst these breaches of the Church, there is yet much difference. For where the Pastors doe their duties onely negligently, or else offend only in manners, neuertheless the double mark of the Church, which is ordinary and to be seen, remayneth. By the double mark of the Church I mean, the seed, and y^e sowing, and also ordination, if so bee that these Pastors, although negligent, bee notwithstanding lawfully called. And if they mingle only some leauen, *The leauen is to be taken beede off*, but the pastors notwithstanding are to be hard, so farre forth, as they sit vppon the chayre, not of Peter, but of Christ: neither doth such a congregation, therefore cease, to bee deemed as a member of the Catholique Church, (or els the Catholique visible Church is no where) although perhaps no other, but uegligent Pastors, corrupt in maners, and mixing some leauen, be found throughout all the whole worlde. Such were in the times of Christe, the Pharisees and Saduces, and the Doctors of the Lawe, whose Leauen hee teacheth, *must bee auoyded*, which yet hee com-

Math. 16.6.

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rommaundeth to bee hearde, So long as *Mat. 23. 2, 3.*
they sit in *Moses Chaire*. But this place
peraduenture, is not of euery one dili-
gently inoughe marked: for it is to bee
noted, oute of other places, that the
writinges of *Moses*, and of the *Pro-
phetes*, were reade bee piccemeale in
the *Synagogues*. Which thing, the
Sections noted, euen at this daye, by a
true order in the *Hebrew* *Bybles*, doe
declare. Nowe, vnto this pure and sin-
cere reading, was added an interpreta-
tion, full of *Leauen*: of which sorte are
these pointes which especiall ye in *Ma-
thew* are plentifully confuted by *Christ*.
Therefore *Christ* commaundeth those
thinges to bee heard out of the *Pulpit*,
which were by custome, sincerely re-
cited out of *Moses* and the *Prophetes*,
in the *Synagogues*: but the *Leauen*,
wherewith they did corrupt, the puritie
of *Doctrine*, to be eschewed. So it is not
to bee doubted, but that that outwarde
Worshippe in the *Temple*, was in the
times of *Christe*, diligently exercised
without *Idolatry*, which also *Godly*
men did diligentl ye persourne, al-
though

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though the right vse of the sacrifices, and of the whole lawe, was vtterly destroyed by the iusticiarie Pharisees, and by the Scribes, which denied the resurrection, that is to say, the chiefe ende of sacrifices. What maner of marchandize of high priestes office, there was then, and that againste the prescript of the lawe, appeareth by histories. But this fault of persons, in so great confusion of thinges, did not abolishe the very facts of the priesthoope, which did depend, not vpon the priest, but vpon the ordinance of God. For there is some certain meaning betweene men meereely priuate, and men lawfully called: to wit, when as some (exercising the place of those that be lawfully called) are either thorough ignorance, or thorough winking at them, borne with al: and in their name execute some publique office, as we read, that it was ordayned in the lawe of the Romans, concerning one Barbaricus Philippus, of which matter we haue in an other place spoken more fullye. Therefore the Church in deed retayned (and that in Pharisaisme and Sadu-
ciisme)

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risme) his note, both of Gods seed, and in some sort also, of the very solving thereof, although it were some what defaced, and yet neyther Pharisiisme nor Saduciisme, was a parte of the sound Church.

But as often as euen openly, the chayre of truth is vtterly destroyed, so that on the one side sincere breade is not propounded vnto vs, so that a man maye receiue it: and on the other side, some Leauen, is so set before vs, that a man may not reiect it, but poysons are drunke to men vnwilling of the same, who will account the congregation of these Molues (or of those which folowe them) for the true eyther Catholique or particular Church. Now I affirme, that the Popedom, that is to saie, the Church of Rome (as at this daie they call it) hath by little and little growen to be suche a one. Seeing that those thinges beeing in deed fulfilled, which both *Paule I. Thessalonians 2.* And also *Iohn* in the description of the Image of the beaste, haue now so many yeares passe, set before

In the Romish church such a one as now a good while it hath been, all the notes of the true Catholique Church, are not in some sort defaced onely, but euen vtterly taken away, as was foretolde by the Apostles.

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our eyes to behold: and the auncient fathers, both Greeke and Latin interpreters, Irene, Chrysostome, Hierome, Augustine, Becla, and Cardinall Cusan himselſe alſo, haue interpreted the ſame of the ſeat of Rome. For which of thoſe three markes of the catholique Church (wher of we haue ſhewed, that one of the one is vnmoueable and perpetuall, the other we haue declared alſo to be ſome time diſcontinued) remaineth in the popiſh Church? For to ſpeake firſt of that proper, perpetuall, and abſolutly neceſſary marke, that is, the holy word written, ſeeing that that is in the popiſhe Church, is not ſet forth vnto the people, but to me in ſundry peeces, and that alſo in a ſtrange tongue: and further, ſeeing that their ſhameleſneſſe hath proceeded ſo far, that they can not beare the ſame to be turned, into vulgare & cōmon ſpeeches, neither yet indure, that the Latin interpretation being barbarous, and in many places falſe, ſhoulde be amended, by the Hebrue and, Greeke copies, is there any man, unleſſe he be by the iuſt iudgement of God blinded, that will iudge theſe

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these men, to be the Catholique Church (in which onely there is saluation) and not rather take it to be that *Babylon*, out of which all, that will not perish ought to depart? But some amongst them say. We do not onely receiue the writings of the *Prophetes* and *Apostles*, but also receiue them, and in deed receiue them more large, than yee receiue them. For for one and two places sake, they ad the bookes which are *Apocriphe*. As though in deed to haue books decked with gold and precious stones, to worship papers transformed into idols, to sing in a strange tongue, parcels torn in sundry peces, or to hang them about the necke, or to vse them in magical inchantments, be the same, that it is to teach the writings of the *Prophets* & *Apostles*. and by these to direct, the whole seruice of God, and to be short, by these to order, the whole life of man.

But againe they saye we haue euery sunday sermons, and the readings also and homelies of the *Doctors*: and to be short, admonitions (as they call them) in parishes. Yea. haue truly. But when

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what manner ones, of whome, and to what end are they had?

Note. Now, to comprehend all thinges in a few words, seeing there be three wayes of corrupting the holy books of scripture, one is, when some thing is taken away from the: the second is, when some thing is added to them: the third, when some thing is changed in them. Who at the length seeth not, that these men are condemned as guilty of so many sortes of falsehood?

That I may beginne with the law. That unwritten word, which they haue deuised & wil haue to be y^e chifest part of y^e seruice of God, & that authority which they take to theselues, to make lawes to bynd mens consciences, by what name shal we call it? Now, haue they not vtterly blotted out, without any shame, y^e second commandment, to the ende they might openly and manifestly, renew al kind of idolatrie, while they haue changed the names onely of ancient Idols? Haue they not oppressed the miserable consciences of Christians, both by new and directly repugnant traditions: and
under

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Under that cloake, *Haue they not deuoured widowes houses onely (as in times past the Pharisees did): but also haue swallowed by empires and kingdonies: To be shorte, haue they not ouerthrowen from the very foundations, the vse and end of the law?* Mat. 23. 14.

And in the Gospell (the other and the chiefest part of Gods word) what haue they left sound? First, what manner of Christ do they set forth vnto vs: verely, a christ now in deed indued with a body without a body: do they propound him, *as he which was made of God vnto vs wisdom:* Yea for sooth, so far as he helpeth our natural light. Do thei propound him as our whole righteousness: for sooth so farre as this thing is attributed to vs, who are therto prepared, partly of our selues, and partly by grace, that the reward of eternall life, may, by desert be ascribed vnto the deseruings of oure righteousness. But what if our owne deseruings be not sufficient: Verely, the deseruings of some certaine saints (whose treasure is not yet in deede drawen out) purchased by a certayne

1. Cor. 1. 30.

price at y hand of these brokers, shal be added vnto vs. And the merites of what saints I beseech you, do they set forth vnto vs? surely, such as the Bishoppes of Rome them selues, shal put into their calendar, and such as euery one shal chuse to him selfe for Patrones and intercessors. But doe they propound Christ as our sanctification? yea for sooth againe, so far as he augmenteth the remnants of our naturall holinesse. Doe they propound him, as our onely redemption? indeed they doe it in worde, but performe nothing lesse in deed. For they except y satisfaction of punishment, which being granted, they make God himselfe most vniust. For what is more wicked, than to require of him, which is not in fault, satisfaccory of punishment? And to what ende hath the Lorde borne our finnes vppon

Esai. 53. 4. 5. the tree? to what end hath our chastisement rested vpon him? But now, seeing we are come to those satisfactions, doe they not most manifestly mocke with God and men, when they teach, that in the sprinkling of conured water, in tapers, in spittle, in oyle, in the signe of the crosse,

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in choyce of meates, in the murmuring
by also of certaine prayers not vnder-
stood, in the prayers of counterfeit saints
for the most part in the worshipping of
images, in the ringing of bells, in a cer-
taine kinde of apparel also, and that af-
ter death suche satisfactions doe consist?
what more? And the moste abominable
wickednesse that hath at any time bene
committed of any man) in the very real
offering of Christ him self for the quick
and the dead, which is therefore so much
the more effectuell, as they say by how
muche it is the more often reiterated,
but in deed, is an open & manifest trea-
ding vnder foot, of the sacrifice, made
once for vs: when they teach I say, that
satisfaction for the punishment of sins,
may be bought at theyr hands, both for
vs that liue, and also for them that be
dead, scorched in that their fier of pur-
gatory: What manner of thing therefore
is this Gospell? And what manner of
Christe is this of the Romishe Pope-
dome? Who also perceiuet not, by the
conference of the word of god, that these
men, by their doctrine of *Opus operatum*,
that

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that is of the worke wrought, haue ouerthrowen all the vse of sacraments: That I may saye nothing of the destroying of the trueth of Christe his bodye, of his Ascension into heauen, and of the article of his descending out of heauen. And that by the opinion of Transubstantiation, they haue overthrowen the definition of a Sacrament: And that they haue polluted the Sacrament of Baptisme, with infinite corruptions: And that they haue taken awaye, euen at the firste, one Element of the Supper of the Lorde: And whilst that afterwarde by a more than abhominable wickednesse (chaunging that Sacrament, into that detestable propitiatorie Sacrifice) they haue vtterly taken awaye, all that holy action, and therefore openly haue by violence pulled away the scale of the couenant of the new Testament: To be shorte, that they haue, by as many false Sacraments, as it pleased them to deuise, taken to them selues, the authoritie of Iesus Christe, eue onely lawe gyuer: Therefore what parte of
Gods

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Gods worde, haue not these men corrupted, or rather cleane taken away? And then where is that onely, true, perpetuall and necessarje marke of the Catholique Church? Where is that Seede, whiche beeing taken away, the spreading of the Church also vpon earth, muste needes be taken away?

Now, if the question be, touching that Ecclesiasticall gouernement (that I may speake some what more fully of this matter, than heretofore I haue done) what I beseeche you, can a man finde, in the Popishe cleargie, but that Image of the beast: Hath not this high Bishoppe succeeded the other high Bishoppe of Rome, which was wont to be therein the hye of the Gentiles? What say I? Hath not that Romishe Pope, snatched to him selfe, (by occupying nowe at the laste, and in some ages here to fore, by sittinge in Rome) the verie name, and all the authoritie of the verie Emperour of Rome? For the thinges whiche yet remaine there, beeing Reliques not so muche
of

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of the Romaine empire, as of y^e Germane
kingdome and gouernment. What are
they more I pray you, but a bare thewe
and name, not onely because, the empe-
rours themselues doe of their owne ac-
cord, at this day, worship the feet of this
beast, but also, because, he suffereth, not
so much as one of his false cleargie, to
be subiect, to any secular power, as they
call it: yea rather who perceiueth not,
this wicked fellow, not contented, with
this so great wickednesse, to be the very
same person, whom Paul fore told should
sit (after the empire of Rome was des-
stroyed) In the temple of God, and exalt
him selfe, above all that is called God? For
is not this he, that openly affirmeth,
that he muste bee iudged of no man,
no not of the Angelles? Who (if his
pryce be giuen him) boasteth that he can
open both heauen and hell: who at his
pleasure openly breaketh all lawes both
of God and men: who also more than
once, with in these few yeares, hath vn-
done lawes established by nature it
selfe: which wickednesse also the pro-
phan city of Rome in time here to fore,
(in

2. Thef. 2. 4.

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(in the raigne of *Claudius* the emperoz)
abhorred: who hath sold euen for a far-
thing those very canons, whose name
was wont, to make a fraide the igno-
rant people.

And as for those purpled Cardinals,
what other thing are they, than an I-
mage, not of y^e auncient senate of *Rome*,
but of that senate which serued the em-
perors, and deuiding the gouernement
betweene them: but who is so ignorant
of the state of *Rome*, that doth not per-
ceiue, that that distribution of gouern-
ments, is a picture of y^e empire of *Rome*
ouerthrowen, which thing also the Bi-
shops of *Rome* themselues, and the wri-
ters that be addicted to them, do wit-
nesse: And as concerning other ecclesia-
sticall functions, such as they were or-
dained of *Christ* by his Apostles, what
doth there remaine among them, but
most vayne names and bare titles: For
the office of a bishop, which in the begin-
ning, that is, while the Church flouri-
shed, was (as *Hierome* also witnesseth)
nothing els, but the office of an elder,
whilst euen immediatly after the time
of

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of the Apoſtles, it proceeded to thoſe
heights of dignities (or as they them-
ſelves ſpeake) prelacies, (of which we
haue before ſpoke) is now a good while
ago, wholly vaniſht away amongeſt
them.

Nowe what is it with them to bee a
miniſter? Is it to be appointed to feede
ſome flocke? Is it to haue y^e ouerſight of
manners, and to beare rule in the Cen-
ſures of the Church? No in deede, but to
haue aucthoritie to offer Chriſt agayn?
What is it to bee a Deacon? Is it to
take charge of the goodes of the Church,
and righty to diſpence them to the mi-
niſters, and the poore, and to render an
account of that which is receiued and
layde out? Fye, fie, for this (except al-
waies the yeelding of accounts) is rather
the onely chiefe and common office, to
all of the whole Popiſh clergie, & ſpeci-
ally of the Pope himſelfe: and that ſo o-
penly and ſo carefully indeede, or coue-
toully rather exerciſed, that they exact,
(euen of thoſe that bee deade manye
yeeres before) a greate Tribute, and,
vnto them that be alive, they doe not
free

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freely giue anye thing, though neuer
so little. Therefore there is no suche,
eyther Bysshoppe or Minister among
them, as the apostle alloweth of: and
as for Deacons, not so muche as one
at all. And yet these bee the men,
that obiecte vnto vs, the succession of
the Apostles. And if so bee, that that
one olde Canon so often times repea-
red in the aunciente Synodes, and
altogether agreeable to the woorde
of God, did preuaile, to wit, that that
ordination which is boughte by mo-
ney (that I may omit the principall
parts of a iust ecclesiastical calling, that
is to say, trial and election, ioined with
the free consent of the whole Church,
which are wholly abolished by them,
if a man consider the thing it selfe,)
should be iudged I say, altogether void,
what marke of Apostolicall ordination,
shall there bee founde amongst them:
vnlesse happelye they meane, that
it is one and the selfe same thing, to
mocke at the order instituted by the
Apostles, and to keepe that Order
dili-

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diligently, which hath beene deliuered
fro hand to hand: and vnlesse they wold
proue, that lawfull and currant coyne,
were to be knowne from counterfeit
mony, by the bare image, grauen vpon
it, and not rather, by the matter it selfe,
especially as often as, they shewe the
same image to both parties.

To be short therefore, what manner of
one is that Catholique church, in which
in steed of true Christ, a most false idoll,
at least wise, in respect of his office, is
set vp: and where in steed of Gods pure
word, partly the traditions of men, and
partly, the traditions of the Deuill are
placed: and where also in steed of succes-
sion, & Apostolicall ordination, nothing
hath place all most but most manifest
and detestable, euen to the Deuill him
selfe as it were, both bying and selling
of soules redeemed by the blood of Christ.
in so much that they woulde haue it to
be accounted, an vnlawfull thinge to
searche into these matters, yea so farre
haue they proceeded that they would co-
demne men (though their cause be not
heard) yf high treason against God and
man

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man, whereas on the other side if a man should graunt these things, there should be nothing so wicked, so blasphemous and so horrible to be thought, which a man might not with their good leaue & liking, think, speak, and write.

But (these men wil say) although we were nothing lesse, than we will seme to be, doth it followe that the name of Catholique Church, which yee take frō vs. doth agree vnto your Churches? So verely. Wherefore we haue in bayne now a long time agoe desired triall to be made, by the matter it selfe, if their bare deniall may be accepted. We therefore affirme, that the three notes of the Catholique Church (to wit, the seeds of the written worde, and the right and lawfull Ecclesiasticall calling and succession, all which we haue restored, are in our possession, and stand on our side. These things they stoutly deny. In deed this controuersie cannot be decided in a few words, neither do I at this present goe about it. But that which I had taken in hand to proue, I hope I haue persourmed, to wit, that the false and

That our Churches haue all the true markes of the Catholique Church, and specially the pure vvorde of God.

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counterfeit notes of the Church, which
they alleaged, are sufficiently confuted,
and the true notes of the Church set
forth and approved.**

**For it is one thing, to dispute of those
markes, which they are, and another to
dispute, who haue them. Notwithstan-
ding, because I haue in few wordes de-
clared, that they haue not those marks,
this thing also I may now speake, that
we haue at least, two very waighty con-
iectures, which make for vs agaynste
them: to wit, that in discerning and try-
ng of opinions, we stay our selues, vpon
the only written word of God, that
is, the writings of the Prophets and A-
postles: and that we require the inter-
pretation of it, by the onely conference
of places, and proportion of the articles
of fayth. Neither do we refuse the wri-
tinges of any, either old or new autho-
r, so y they may be examined, by the rules
afore sayd: by Gods worde, and the pro-
portion of faith. But what these me ob-
iect against these vpright requestes, it
sufficiently appeareth.**

**Now in the question of succession and
ordis**

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ordination, they haue thought that not many yeares agoe, they haue found out, a more certain reason to dispute against vs. For they demaund euen with great loftinesse and pride, that we shoulde shew them, whom they haue succeeded, which in our times haue established our Churches, as though we were no better able, to shew our original, thā the *Donatistes* coulde theirs. We aunswere that the doctrine which we defend, hath (euen from the time of the Apostles, although heresies haue assaulted it, & the Romish false bishops, and others, made drunke by y^e harlot, haue by al y^e means they could, and that for the space of certaine yeres polluted it) continued notwithstanding, euen vntill our times, & shall continue, euen to the end of y^e world; and that about 200 yeeres since this light of the Gospell began againe, (and that thorow the singular goodnes of God) in y^e west to apeare, out of y^e filth of popery, & those hidde places, into which these mē had thrust it, vntill y^e candlesticks, which were take away, were set again in their places, & by that means the elect people

That our Churches, haue the true Apostolicall succession.

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of God, did from all quarters flow to-
gether vnto the sayd truth.

2.The.2.7. But as concerning the succession of
the holy ministry, we say, that that mi-
nistry of iniquity (which the Apostle witnes-
seth in his time to haue beene begun, was
not accomplished, but in some processe &
length of time, and therfore y^e that old
Church of Rome became, & that but by
little & litle, of Apostolical, Apostatical,
that is, fallen from the truth: and we af-
firme that other Churches (as it is eui-
dent by histories) did not straightwaies
fall away from the foundation, but the
2.The.2.4. verely, when as in the church, the false
bishop, and sonne of perdition in deed, cal-
ling him selfe the vniuersall head of the
Church) did at the length, exalt himselfe
aboue all that is called God. And that this
was don when the kings and Princes,
yea, and the very Pastors them selues,
in other countries, being bewitched by
this harlot, had submitted them selues
to the feet of Antichrist. Now, when, &
by what degrees and sleights that hath
bene brought to passe, cannot else wher
be better not only known, but euen per-
ceiued

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ceiued almost by the very eyes, than by
the very liues of the bishops the selues,
declared by good and sufficient writers:
y^e euent and falling out of things iust-
lye agreeing with the foretellings of
y^e Apostles, and y^e expositions of the lear-
ned, both ancient, and also certaine new
writers, which our very aduersaries,
dare not refuse, in so much that y^e which
the Apostle heretofore spake of his mi-
nistrie, *that his Gospell was had in deed fro*
them that should perish, & whome the God
of this world had blinded, that the light of
the Gospel of the glory of Christ should not
shine vpon them, the same we may now
most truely affirme of this wicked An-
tichristian sinck, faining or pretending
the name of the Catholique Church.
Therefore we haue next after the Apo-
stles, for successors, those very right iud-
ging pastors, not onely of the Roman
church, but of other churches also, whose
succession (beeing broken of by these
wolves & tirants) we haue begun tho-
row Gods goodnes at the last to restore:
so farre of is it, either that we are desti-
tute of the lawfull argument of successi-
on,

2. Cor. 4. 24.

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on, or that they shoulde bee able to alleage any Apostolicall succession.

That the Catholique Church hath bene, and in some respect as yet is, in the Pope-dome thogh the Pope-dome be not the Catholique church nor any part thereof.

Math. 21. 33.
34.

Therefore say these men, where was that Catholique visible Church, aboute two hundred yeres past? Christ himself maketh answer for vs, that it hath bin heretofore, and as yet in some respect is, in the bandes of the wicked husbandedmen, who themselves, slew the seruantes of the Lorde, being sent vnto them, and with all, as much as they coulede, euen the Sonne himselfe, beeing cast oute of the Vineyard: and in steede of him, they haue placed a Christ in words, wherewith they mocke the people, but in deede euerye one, euen the wickedst of their owne sort, that they can or could get. But it is well, that neyther the eternall keeper of that vine, can againe in deede be cast out, neither could againe be slaine. Who liueth vnto God, and who also nowe againe appearing, hath begun, to lette out that Vineyard, to good and faithfull husbandmen, Paule also answereth in oure behalfe, foretelling that which wee see fulfilled: To wit, that that wicked one, shoulde vsurpe to
him

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him self the Temple of the Lorde, vntill the 2. Thel. 2. 4.
Lorde shoulde agayne discover him. Iohn
also aunswereth that that woman, hauing
lately brought forth hir Childe, bath
together with hir Childe, layen hidde in
the wilderness, free from the Dragon,
who trusted to, and vsed also, and was euen
as it were vpkele with the power of
Kinges and Princes: And that that ho-
ly Citie, hath in the meane time conti-
nued sure, not for a smale time, but for
two and forty monethes, or a thousand two
hundred and sixty dayes. But we leaue
the account of those dayes to Sharper
witted men: we vrgen onely the matter
it selfe. Therefore, to speake plainely,
we say, that so long as that great Mi-
chaell did appeare by little and little,
killing that Dragon with the sworde
of his worde (which hee hath agayne
committed to his faythfull seruauntes)
or with the spirite of his mouth, that so
long the Catholique Church, (that is
to saye, euery number though neuer so
smal, of such as helde fast both the per-
sonne, and also the office of the true
Christe) laye hidde in the filthinesses

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of the Romish Babylon, whilest y^e wicked
one with his angels, vsurping the seate
of the ministry, and the harlot that sate
vpon the seuen hilles, did make y^e world
drunke with her dreggs.**

**But they say, that this true Church,
ought always to be visible.**

In what
sense the
true Church
is called vi-
sible.

**To this, if I shall aunswere, that the
true Church indeed, hath alwaies beene
visible, and so shall be, so farre forth as
she consisteth, of true visible members,
and that it is not a counterfayte thing:
and also that it is visible so farre forth,
as it hath outward and euident marks:
& yet not in such sorte visible: as though
they that embrace true religion, should
always so agree, that euery man might
pointe out with this finger, both who
they are, and where they are: if I saye
I shall aunswere this, I shall indeede
speake, as the matter is, and that which
I haue a little before, by reasons and
examples declared. But I make not this
place my refuge: so I saye, that if wee
will fetch records, euen from the Apo-
stles themselves (who haue as it were
with their finger poynted oute this
wicked**

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Wicked one, and all his false Church) that then we shall find, that there scarce hath beene any age, but that therein, so soone as this Antichriste began to shew his head, the Lord hath alwayes stirred vp some, who did set themselves against his tyrannie. If they denie this thing, let them laye a wager, but withall let them giue pledges or sureties for y^e perfourmaunce, & I doubt not but we shall shew forth euen to al men, y^e the thing is so (vnlesse they had rather be willingly blynd) yea and that by good and sufficient witnesses, and by cleare, euident, and manifest testimonies, drawn out of their very owne courtes and recozds.

But the aduersaries cannot so be bzi- deled, but that they will reply, deman- ding at the last, what laying on of hāds we are able to alleadge, that they haue receiued, by whō, in our time our churches haue bene established. For so I re- member, *Spensa*, a Doctor of the Sorbo- nistes, did cry out against vs, by whome afterward there was published concer- ning these matters, a boultome verpe grosse, and full of flanders.

That the true laying on of hands remayneth vvholy with vs.

First

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How farre
forth the lay
ing on of
handes hath
beene coun-
ted necessari
to a lavvfull
calling.

*So called of
one Lucifer,
vwho helde
that the soul
vvas of the
substance of
the flesh.

First I answered that, which he him-
selfe elsewhere hath noted out of *Hierom*,
against the **Luciferians*, which place al-
so *Gratian* hath put into his decrees: to
wit, that the laying on of handes after
baptisme pertaineth rather to the honoꝝ
of priesthood (as they call it) than to bind
any by necessitie of lawe, to obserue
it. After this sort therefore I saye, did
Hierome iudge whome they call vpon
amongste their Sayntes. But they
will replie forsooth that he disputeth of
laying on of handes in confirmation,
and not of laying on of handes in ordi-
nation, as they are wonte to speake.
Whiche that I maye graunte to bee so,
(although *Spensia* thoughte otherwise)
what shall this replication or excep-
tion helpe them: for they themselves do
not onely number confirmation among
the Sacraments, but also (when it plea-
seth them) they account it more excel-
lent, than Baptisme it selfe. But let
vs omit this thing. They confesse (vn-
lesse they will dissent from *Bernard*, in
his Epistle 77. who notwithstanding,
standeth bothe vpon the worde of God,
and

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and also vppon the authoritie of *Austen* and *Ambrose*) that those whiche are of the peeres of discretion, are blotted out of the Church, for contempt of Baptisme, and not for the want of it. And what shall let vs, that wee maye not muche more speake the same thing, of the laying on of handes, vlsed in giuing orders: vnllesse peradventure, they shall saye, that that is more to bee required vnto the holy Ministerye, than Baptisme vnto saluation. But howe can these excellent seruauntes of God, seeme to haue condemned the laying on of handes, which in our time, by a verie Heauenlye inspiration, haue deliuered the Church from the Tyrannye of Antichriste, when as they had none, of whome they could lawfully, euen by the warrant of the olde Canons themselves, aske, or receiue the same: for I haue before shewed, & yet affirme this thing, that there can not be found one amongst the whole clergie of *Rome*, which is able, by the pure and auncient canons, to defend their ordination to be lawfull. What say I: It appeareth that
euen

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AA.8.4.

AA.8.14.

even in the most pure Church also, the laying on of hands, was not counted so necessary: for who I beseech you laid his hands upon *Philip*, that of a Deacon he should be made an Evangelist: who laid hands upon them, in that firste dispersing of them selues abroad at *Hierusalem* (the very Apostles also being ignorant therof) preached the Gospel with so great fruit in *Samaria*: but these men, *Peter* and *Iohn* were afterwarde sent, who should lay their hands upon them. Yea for sooth vpon those who beleued and were baptised, for as for the which first had preached the Gospel vnto the: there is no mentiō at all made of them. But let vs put the case that this place were to be vnderstood of these men also. The Apostles therefore ratified that, which the other as occasion serued had done, even before examination, and before ordinary election, not meaning to make the laying on of hands, to be absolutely necessary. And if these men be the successors of the Apostles (as they will be called and accounted) why have not they them selues also, & that by the example

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example of the Apostles, made haste, to approve at the least, the zeale of godly men: Or why did they not helpe, the attempt of that Archbishop of Colen, rather than they should have betrayed him to that Romish Antichrist: for a reward also, of which wicked deed Gropperus had the Cardinals hat bestowed upon him, a couer in deed worthy for suche a cup. For sooth (they will say) because ye are heretiques. Therefore the question must be of the doctrine and not of the laying on of handes, and then (as I hope) we shall get the victory.

But they will againe reply that that thing was lawfull at the first, when the Churches were springing: but now an order beeing once established, the same thing is not lawfull. I aunswere that I confesse, there ought great regard, to be had of the times, & that they are not to be borne with all, who violate the lawes of the Church, beeing well established. But what if I shall say that the lawes of right and lawfull ordination are not violated by vs, but that (when they were taken away and defaced by them,

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them, that sayned them selues to be the keepers of that order) we haue applyed our selues to the restitution, and restauration of them: For, that this thing is so, it appeareth by this, that (excepting the ceremonies which are iustly abrogated) al thinges comanded in the word of God, and prescribed in the auncient pure canons, are obserued exactly in our Churches, but amongst them, manifestly neglected. Now, who, when Pastors by common consent, are chaunged into Wolues, woulde saye, that the sheepe shoulde looke for such manner of ayde, from Wolues: and that shoulde bee condemned, whiche after the example of the Prophets, doth willingly set himselfe againste wolues: Let this controuerisie therefore be firste disputed of, before the question be made, touching the forme of ordination: and let these men leaue of to boast of the apparell and outward shewe of Pastors, when as inwardly they be rauening wolues. Merely Christ commandeth true Pastors to be distinguished from false, not by laying on of hands, But by their fruits, y is, by

Mat. 7. 15.

Mat. 7. 16.

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by doctrine and maners. But what wil their Passors that be made, by Bulles and licences, answere to these things?

They being inforced, to condemne extraordinary vocations, and that more than once, and without exception also, at the laste they flie vnto myracles, which they will haue of necessitie to be requyred, to this extraordinary vocati- on. But if a man bydde them alleadgc, oute of what place of Scripture, they haue at the length drawen this rule: then it necessarily followeth, eyther y they can speake no more than fysthes, or els betwraie extream shamelesnesse.

Now, firste it is manifest that the gyfte of myracles, hath alwayes beene free, that is, set in the power of God alone, who hath gyuen the same at certayne tymes, and to certayne persons: Therefore we can make no rule of it. Next, seeing that not onely Christ hath foretolde, but also the olde and new stor- yes witnesse, that this gyft, was com- mon both to true, and also to false Pro- phetes, what madnesse shall it argue, to bee desirous to haue the false sen- ding,

That mira-
cles are not
necessary to
prooue anye
holy, lawfull
vocation, ei-
ther ordina-
rie or extra-
ordinarie.

ding to be discerned from the true, by miracles?

By what
meanes false
vocations
may be pro-
perly discer-
ned.

Then you will say, it shall be lawfull
for euery one to teach in the Church: no
in deed. For who soeuer (where there is
place for order) dispiseth that order, he
declareth by this very thing, that he is
not of God and therefore not to be heard.
Therefore the *Donatistes*, who were in
deed *Schismatiques*, are by this reason
iustly cōdemned, because, though it had
bene most true, which they objected vn-
to *Occilianus*, yet the order of the church,
was not for that cause to be broken, and
they were not to be bozne with, when
for the defection of some Churches, they
cryed out, that all the world was fallen
away. But where a generall disorder,
vnder the shew of order, beareth sway,
and no remedy can be looked for, from
the authours of this mischiese: then
doubtlesse, this must be performed that
euen as when a fier is rayled in a City,
those men cessing, or setting the city it
selfe a fier, which by the ordinances of
the city, ought to haue come to the quen-
ching of that fier, it is the part of euery
good

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good Citizen, to carrie water, yea euen without order, and to cast it vpon the flames: so in this, much more dāgerous fire of the Temple of the Lorde, it is the duetie of euery godly man, as muche as in him lieth, to set him self against that euil: and also of the godly magistrate, to provide that a lawfull order bee restored. So haue the godly Prophets in times past done: so haue y^e godly kinges Ezechias and Iosias done: and vnlesse y^e very Christian Emperors, when heresies bare greate sway, had interposed their authoritie, none had more beaten down the Church (as at the length we see it to haue bene done) than they that gouerned the chiefest seates. And if notwithstanding all this, there haue beene no ordinary vocation, in the times of these ancient Synodes, we muste know that that fell out in deed, because, that a lawfull order then established in the church, was not altogether abolished, as it is manifest that it hath beene performed, now sundry ages since, thorow the tyranny of the false Romish Bishop: ther remayning amongst them not so much

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as a very slender shadow of the principall parts of Ecclesiasticall vocation: to wit, of triall and election: but (after a most filthy sale of all thinges), they being onely a vicelike kinde of laying on of hands, thereby to deceiue the comon people.

VVe vvant not euen that laying on of hands vvwhich the false church of Rome, doth vntru-ly make simply necessa-rye to a lawfull calling.

But though these thinges were not forcible (vvhich indeed are yet notwithstanding most strong) what doth an extraordinary vocation appertaine to vs? For it is most manifest, that those firste restozers of Gods house, in the dayes of our forefathers: to wit, *Wickliffe, Hus, Hierome of Prage, Luther, Bucer, Oecolampadius, Swinglius, Pellican, Haller, and very many other*) had the selfe same laying on of hands that these men require, giuen them by their Bishops, to teache the people: by whome after wardes the Churches were, by little and little restozed: In which Churches also, we as- firme, that the true vocation of pastors, Doctors, and Deacons, was restozed. Now I call that a true calling, which is according to the prescript of Gods word.

But

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But here againe our vnoorderly ordina-
ries suppose, that they haue found out
some what, wherein they may manifest-
ly blame vs. For they deny, that albeit
those men, whom euen now we named,
were ministers, y^e therefore we are law-
fully ordayned, seeing that bishops one-
ly may ordayne ministers, muche lesse
say they, can we be bishops. I in deed do
willingly leaue vnto them, at this state
of bishoppely gouernment, whereof I
plainely say, that the holy Ghost was
not the auctor, but mans wisdom, and
vpon which, vnlesse we perceiue
that God hath layed a curse, verely we
do as yet see nothing at all: and we fo-
ster a Wiper in our bosome, which will
again kill the mother. But of this mat-
ter we will speake in an other place.

Now onely I demaund of these men,
from whence they haue fet this: for sooth
from the second Canon of the Apostles,
(as they call it). But Gelasius the Pope
him selfe doth reckon these Canons, as
mongst the writings counted *Apocrypha*: to wit I suppose, at the least for the
titles sake. For he must needes be too

The laying
on of hands,
belongeth
to the pres-
biterie and
not to that
state of By-
shops which
men haue
deuised.

impudent, that woulde deny these Canons, to haue bene made in more ages than one, so farr is it of, that ridiculous inuention (attributed to I cannot tel to what Clement, and lately published in Greeke and Latin, in which the Apostles are brought in one by one establishing these matters, may bee allowed of any man that is of any sound sense or iudgement. But to what end should we handle these thinges so largely? That the Euangelists were about the ministers of which we speake (for otherwise Peter the Apostle, calleth euen him selfe a fellow minister with the. 1. Pet. 5. 1.) these men dare not deny, because the Apostle him selfe setteth them before Pastors and Doctors. Ephe. 4. 11. But euen Paul, him selfe witnesseth, that Timothie, not appointed a Bishop to Ephesus, or any other Church, but an Euangelist, and the companion of Paule the Apostle, did not receiue the imposition, or laying on of handes, no not from Paule him selfe, but from the presbiterie, that is, from the companie or fellowshippe of Elders. Wherefore if these men that mind to descend

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send the false bishoply tyrannie, be disposed to reason, let the dispute not with *Geminianus* (as *ciuil lawiers* are wont to say) but with *Paul* him selfe. We verely thinke those to be lawfully ordained, who hauing according to the Apostles rule, an exact inquirie of their doctrine and maners going before, and a free and hoily election, by the consent of the whole Church, which they are to gouerne, are consecrated and dedicated to God by sollemne prayes, and the very rite of laying on of handes bled (if men shall so thinke good) but yet simple, and of it selfe, and not defiled with any traditions of men.

Now seeing these things are so, I say that the fauourers of the false Romishe Church, doe in vayne set out or object, those three notes of the Church: to wit, succession meereley personall, a calling sundred from the doctrine of the Apostles: and the laying on of hands. And I say this, both because that none of these by it selfe, can be either, a true, or simple necessary, or perpetuall note of the vniuersal Church: and also, because that

The conclusion of the vvhole Treatie.

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though it were so, yet that no one of these notes at all, can be founde, in the false Romishe Church, which doth notwithstanding cal hir selfe, (though most falsely,) the vniuersall Church: and on the other side I affirme, that that onely, true, necessary and perpetuall marke of the Catholique Church, that is to say, that doctrine, which is most perfectly contayned in the wytyngs of the Prophetes and Apostles, doth once agayne shine bright and cleere in our Churches: and to be shorte, that the very personall succession, vocation, and ordination of the holy and right ministrie, are restored in the same our Churches: and that we haue not forsaken Syon, but haue fled
Reuel. 18.4. out of Babylon as the Lorde warneth vs: & that, wee haue not rent in sunder the Church, but following Pauls fact, in the Church of Ephesus, mentioned Acts. 19. 9. haue seperated Disciples to the Lord: and that we haue not by the example of Ieroboam, or the Donatistes, set vp altar against altar, but casting the altar brought from Damascus out of the Lordes house, we haue begun to restore the true and
sincere

Reuel. 18.4.

2. King. 16.
10. &c.

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sincere worship of God, which worke
also I hope (although Sathan, do by his
ministers set himselfe against the same,
both within the Church, and without
it) shall yet notwithstanding (when that
sonne of perdition, shall at the last be

2. Thes. 2. 8.

thoroughly ouertbrowen, by the spi-
rit of Gods mouth) be blest
sedly atchieued and
finished.

Τω Θεω Δόξα

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